

1. Definitions

Healthwatch refers to Healthwatch Brighton and Hove.

Employees refers to all Healthwatch employees.

Volunteers refers to anyone who volunteers for Healthwatch Brighton and Hove.

2. Scope

This policy covers all employees and volunteers.

3. Policy Aims

- 3.1. Modern slavery is a term used to describe the crimes of holding a person in a position of slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, or human trafficking (facilitating a person's travel with the intention of exploiting them soon after). These crimes exist across the world, including the UK. They can occur in any business sector, including those in government supply chains.
- 3.2. Modern slavery remains one of the greatest challenges of our time with millions of people around the world suspected of being trapped within it. We all must play our part in tackling the evil of modern slavery. Healthwatch deeply cares about our employees, potential employees, volunteers, and workers in our supply chains and wants to mitigate the risk of modern slavery. We are committed to the principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and the abolition of modern slavery and human trafficking.
- 3.3. We recognise that we have a clear responsibility to ensure that our activities and funding do not inadvertently fund criminal activity and to protect vulnerable people from exploitation.

4. Healthwatch Brighton and Hove

- 4.1. Healthwatch Brighton and Hove is a Community Interest Company, with offices currently located in central Brighton. The total full-time equivalent employees as of July 2024, was 4.7 WTE and total headcount was six. We do not employ agency staff. At any one time we also have between 30-50 unpaid volunteers supporting our operation. Procurement of services and supply management are the responsibility of the CEO although due to the small size of the team, all staff may be involved.
- 4.2. We receive core funding of £178,600 from Brighton and Hove City Council. We bring in additional funding by undertaking commissioned work, which may be regarded as providing services.

5. Our supply chain.

- 5.1. We will not enter into business with any organisation in the UK which knowingly supports or is found to be involved in slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. We adopt a risk averse approach and apply due diligence to new and existing contracts and suppliers.
- 5.2. Due to the nature of our business, we assess ourselves to have a low risk of modern slavery in our business and supply chains. Our supply chains are limited, and we procure goods and services from a small range of UK suppliers.
- 5.3. We work with NHS funded organisations and also work with the Care Quality Commission, Healthwatch England, other local Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprises and Brighton and Hove Council. We buy services from a small range of organisations relating to IT support and security, online survey platforms, DBS clearance and Council safeguarding training. We purchase supplies from local shops and large, reputable online retailers.
- 5.4. We make all reasonable checks to determine that suppliers contracting with Healthwatch are meeting their obligations under the Modern Slavery Act.

6. Recruitment processes

- 6.1. As an equal opportunities' employer, we are committed to creating and ensuring a non-discriminatory and respectful working environment for our staff and volunteers. We want all our staff and volunteers to feel confident that they can expose wrongdoing without any risk to themselves. We maintain a whistleblowing policy to enable staff and volunteers to raise concerns related to modern slavery and other matters.
- 6.2. Our recruitment processes are designed to ensure that all prospective employees and volunteers are legally entitled to work in the UK and to safeguard employees from any abuse or coercion. We ask for references, proof of right to work and undertake DBS checks as part of our recruitment processes.

7. Embedding the principles.

- 7.1. We will continue to embed the principles through:
 - providing awareness training to staff and volunteers on the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and informing them of the appropriate action to take if they suspect a case of slavery or human trafficking.
 - ensuring that consideration of the modern slavery risks and prevention are added to our policy review process as an employer and procurer of goods and services.

- continuing to take action to embed a zero-tolerance policy towards modern slavery.

8. Monitoring and improvement

- 8.1. We recognise the importance of maintaining constant vigilance to identify and address any issues associated with slavery and human trafficking and to ensure it is not taking place in any part of our organisation or supply chains.
- 8.2. We are committed to continuing to enhance our capacity to identify, prevent and mitigate any actual or potential risks in these areas.

9. Acting when victims of Modern Slavery are identified

- 9.1. We recognise that through our public engagement work, as well as working relationships with partners, suppliers and contractors, our employees or volunteers may encounter a potential victim of modern slavery. We provide the following advice to them:
- 9.2. Victims of modern slavery can be any age, gender, nationality and ethnicity. They may be tricked or threatened into work and may feel unable to leave or report the crime through fear or intimidation. They may not recognise themselves as a victim and, often, will be afraid to access NHS services.
- 9.3. The signs are not always obvious but can include:
 - Does someone look malnourished or injured?
 - Are they acting anxious, afraid or unable to make eye contact?
 - Are they doing long hours, wearing unsuitable clothing or have the wrong equipment for the job?
 - Is where they are living or working overcrowded, poorly maintained or are the curtains always closed?
 - Do they behave like they are being instructed by someone else, picked up/dropped off at the same time and place every day or don't have access to money or identification?
- 9.4. **Report it.** Healthwatch has an important role to play in recognising abuse. If you recognise any of the above signs and suspect someone may be a victim of modern slavery, tell someone. You will always be taken seriously and protection and support is available.
- 9.5. To report a suspicion or seek advice you can contact the Modern Slavery Helpline confidentially on 08000 121 700. This is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

- 9.6. You can also report it to the Police [online](#) or call 101 at any time to report an incident. If you're deaf or hard of hearing, use the textphone service on 18001 101.
- 9.7. Should you wish to remain anonymous you can contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.
- 9.8. Always **call 999** if there is a crime in action or immediate threat to life. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, use the textphone service 18000 or text 999 if you have pre-registered.
- 9.9. [Find out more about the Unseen App](#)

10. Additional Policies & Documents

- 10.1. Our policies in relation to the modern slavery act 2015 include:
 - Grievance Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Recruitment and selection Policy
 - Whistleblowing Policy
 - Safeguarding Policies
- 10.2. The Healthwatch policies and documents referred to in this policy are available on request by contacting the Healthwatch Team on 01273 234 040 or email to policies@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk.

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