

Surrey Anti-Slavery Partnership



Modern Slavery – Right Here, Right Now



Detective Chief Inspector Kerry Loveless is the Surrey Police and South-East regional lead for Modern Slavery. This is what she has to say about Modern Slavery in Surrey.

Modern Slavery is present on all of our doorsteps. Because it can often be a hidden crime – less obvious than other crime types – people often don't realise that it is happening in their communities.

But there is not one part of Surrey that does not experience the exploitation of people as a commodity, so it is vital that communities keep their eyes and ears open for the signs that something is wrong.

A recently emerging industry where Modern Slavery is apparent in Surrey and nationally is the private care sector. Carers are recruited from outside the UK and promised safety and a good salary. In reality they are exploited in terms of hours they are made to work and the amount of money that is taken from them by their exploiters. Sadly, it is likely that we will see the private care sector experience more and more exploitation. It is all of our responsibility to call out exploitation and ensure conditions for exploiters to operate in are as hostile as possible.

Signs to be aware of:

- Carer is likely to be from an African nation and newly working in the UK
- Carer appears tired or in poor health
- Carer has no apparent means of transport to move between clients/no obvious local transport links to facilitate this
- Carer is not keen to engage in conversation
- Carer appears fearful or unhappy

How to engage with carers:

If you are comfortable to engage with a carer and they are willing to speak to you, some things you may want to find out are:

- What is their typical working day like – duration, number of clients? Do they get days off?
- How do they travel between clients?
- What sort of accommodation do they live in and who with?
- Are they sending money back home to support others?
- Do they have access to their passport or other ID documents?
- Is the job what they expected it to be and if not in what way does it differ to what was agreed?

If the responses to any of these enquiries cause you concern, you can contact a number of organisations to help you.

What to do if you are concerned:

- Contact **Surrey Police** – **999** if an emergency or **101** if not urgent
- Contact the **Modern Slavery Helpline (0800 121700)** – please give as much information as possible in terms of people, locations and what you are concerned about
- **Crime-Stoppers (0800 555111)** – this is anonymous reporting which means we have no way of getting in touch with you to clarify any information, so please give as much detail as possible to enable us to take action.
- If you consider it appropriate advise your Safeguarding Officer.

Common Methods of Exploitation in the Care Sector:

- Carers are recruited from outside the UK and sponsored to work here – they are usually from African nations.
- On arrival the accommodation they are given is provided by the exploiter and the cost of it taken at source from their earnings.
- They are made to work excessive hours daily and without days off. If they complain they are threatened with having their sponsorship withdrawn and being deported.
- They are charged for “legal fees”, often up to £15,000, which are deducted at source. It is unclear what the nature of these fees are.
- They are not provided with access to transport to travel between their clients. If they are provided with transport, they are charged for this and it is deducted from their salary at source.
- Some victims have advised that there are large distances between clients and they have been told by their exploiters to “run” between them if no public transport is available.
- Due to all of the deductions, victims are being paid only a small fraction of what was agreed when they were recruited.
- Some victims report being verbally and physically abused by their exploiters, or their shifts taken away/ cut if they complain about working conditions, causing them even greater financial difficulty.

If we all work together we can bring this form of slavery to an end – thank you for your support.