

Information for Practitioners on Modern Day Slavery

Modern slavery is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and categorises offences of slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. Modern slavery forces someone into the position of exploitation. This may involve: forced labour (in agriculture, construction, hospitality etc.), domestic servitude, sham marriage (not a genuine marriage, one party seeks immigration advantage), begging, drug cultivation, forced marriage, illegal adoption, the prostitution of adults, child sexual exploitation and organ harvesting (trade of human organ or other tissue for means of transplantation). It should also be noted that Modern Slavery is now listed as a category of abuse within the Care Act 2014.

Modern slavery and human trafficking are linked with people smuggling but there are fundamental differences: modern slavery and human trafficking involves the threat of or use of force, coercion or deception against a victim, and people smuggling involves migrants being helped with entry into a State through illegal means.

Signs that someone is a victim of modern slavery include but not exclusively: a lack of identity documents or passport; reluctance to give an address and explain how they came to be here; lack of basic necessities; little or no money; language barriers; living in insecure or overcrowded accommodation; showing signs of trauma or mental ill health; acting as if they were instructed or coached by someone else; others speaking on their behalf when spoken to directly, limited social interaction or contact with people outside their immediate environment and / or limited freedom of movement.

The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a framework for identifying victims of human trafficking or modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support. It is designed to enable agencies including the police, UK Border Agency, local authorities, and non-governmental organisations to co-operate, to share information about potential modern slavery victims and facilitate their access to advice, accommodation and support. The NRM also enables the National Crime Agency, (NCA) and the Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Unit (MSHTU) to collate national data about the scope and nature of human trafficking & modern slavery in the UK.

What should Practitioners do?

Practitioners should be alert to the signs of any aspect of modern day slavery as a potential perpetrator may also be a victim.

- Frontline officers and staff should first take immediate and effective steps to ensure that a person suspected of being enslaved is made safe.
- If you are aware of a potential victim of modern slavery then it is likely to be a child protection and/or adult safeguarding issue as well as a criminal offence. Any potential child victim must be referred into ChECS 0300 123 5012 and a decision to refer to the National Referral Mechanism should take place automatically.
- A potential victim under the age of 18 years must be represented by an appropriate

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adult or child advocate, who should be carefully selected. It may not be in the best interests of a child to be interviewed at an early stage of their discovery or during initial contact with authorities. It is important that the child is placed in appropriate secure accommodation before being interviewed.

- Any potential adult victim should be referred to the Adult Contact Team 0300 123 5010 (working hours) and 0300 123 5022 (out of working hours). Staff can also contact 101 to report a criminal offence.
- If the person making initial contact with a potential victim does not have the requisite knowledge or expertise to sensitively handle vulnerable and traumatised individuals, they should refer to their line manager or duty officer immediately. The line manager or duty officer is responsible for progressing and arranging a referral into the NRM (The local authority is classed as a first responder and has a responsibility to make a referral). In order to complete a referral into the NRM, consent must be sought from the victim. Discussion needs to take place with the Police to determine who will complete the referral.
<https://www.modernslavery.gov.uk/start?hof-cookie-check>
- If consent is not given, the practitioner should instead ensure that an MS1 Duty to Notify form is completed. This does not name the person of concern but requires the practitioner to provide as much other detail as possible. Completed forms should be sent to the email address on the referral form.
- Adult Slavery victims do not have to have identified Care and Support needs to receive Safeguarding Support. For those adults who do not have care and support needs where a safeguarding enquiry takes place the worker will need to select 'other safeguarding enquiry' on the electronic case recording system.
- Where the age of a potential victim is uncertain and there are reasons to believe that the person is a child, they should be presumed to be a child and receive immediate access to protection, support, accommodation and advice, as stipulated by section 51(2) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. If the potential victim looks older than the age they claim to be, a request should be made to a suitably trained social worker, nurse or approved mental health professional for an age assessment.
- Ensure effective communication including use of independent interpreters (do not use family members as potentially they could be part of the slavery/trafficking gang).

Emergency Planning

If the Slavery Case involves a large number of victims, and therefore may require the establishment of an Emergency Rest Centre, the Council will follow its Major Emergency Response Plan. ASC will liaise with the Joint Cheshire Emergency Planning Team Tel: (01244) 973869/ Duty EPO: 0845-124-9830

Email:EmergencyPlanningTeam@cheshiresharedservices.gov.uk

Further information and links to other policies

The NRM forms and more information are available from the government's Modern Slavery webpages <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms>. There is also a webpage and helpline tel: 08000 121 700, <https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/>. For information locally on Modern Slavery see CE Safeguarding Adults Board website:

<http://www.stopadultabuse.org.uk/what-is-abuse/modern-slavery.aspx>