



WM SOCIAL CARE

• International Recruitment •

International Recruitment Bulletin

Issue Number 7: September 2025

WELCOME TO THE LATEST INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT E-BULLETIN!

As we move into the 2025-2025 phase of the International Recruitment (IR) Programme, our focus remains firmly on supporting care providers and protecting international care workers from exploitation. With new challenges on the horizon – including major changes to immigration rules and the end of overseas recruitment – our collective responsibility is to ensure that international care workers already here are safe, supported, and give the best possible chance of building a life here.

The West Midlands IR Programme continues to provide vital resources, from job matching and training to safeguarding and wellbeing support. Local authorities, delivery partners, and care providers across the region are working tirelessly to embed ethical recruitment practices and strengthen community resilience.

THIS MONTH, WE ARE PLEASED TO SHARE A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT UPDATES:

Beyond the Numbers

What three years of international recruitment has taught us.



Funding secured for 2025/26:

The International Recruitment Programme will continue under the DHSC International Recruitment Regional Fund.



New immigration rules introduced:

Overseas recruitment has formally ended, with transitional arrangements in place until 2028.



Lifted confirmed as regional job-matching provider: With new features introduced from September 2025.



Warning over supplementary hours: Guidance for care providers to ensure compliance with visa conditions.



Strengthening community resilience: Initiatives following the 2024 riots, plus work on social cohesion and proposals for a new international recruitment route.



Tackling exploitation: Sandwell Council leading a new regional webinar series on safeguarding and modern slavery.



My UK Life: New feature coming soon to enable international care workers to share their stories.



Local highlights:

- Dudley's first international care worker event
- Coventry & Warwickshire Council's Health & Wellbeing Event
- Tulia International Care Worker Event
- How Warwickshire County Council is Helping International Care Workers
- Targeted training that fits real care work
- New Slang Booklet



Driving support for care workers: Coventry's step-by-step guidance and Solihull's transport solutions.



Together, these efforts reinforce our shared commitment: to safeguard care workers, strengthen ethical recruitment, and build a resilient workforce for the future.

BEYOND THE NUMBERS: WHAT THREE YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT HAS TAUGHT US IN COVENTRY AND THE WEST MIDLANDS



Pete Fahy, Vice-Chair & IR Lead of WM-ADASS Branch and Director of Adult Services & Housing, Coventry City Council

Over the past three years, Coventry and the wider West Midlands have been at the

forefront of large-scale international recruitment in social care. While this has eased immediate pressures, it has also exposed vulnerabilities, tested systems, and brought very human consequences for workers, employers, and communities.

As Vice-Chair and International Recruitment Lead of WM-ADASS, and Director of Adult Services & Housing at Coventry City Council, I have seen first-hand that this journey was never simply about filling vacancies. It has been about people arriving with hope, dreams, and expectations, and facing profound challenges when things went wrong. Coventry became a major landing point for international recruits. For many, this represented opportunity:

One worker told us

“I came to the UK because I wanted to care. It was my dream job,”

But alongside hope came risk. When sponsorship licences were revoked, workers were suddenly left without income, employment, or immigration status. The impact was devastating. As another worker shared:

“I sold my land to pay the agency. When the licence was taken away, I had nothing.”

These were not isolated cases but multiple crises landing at once. Our teams responded relentlessly – providing advice, linking people to support, and navigating complex systems alongside workers at moments of real distress. This was an intensive and human response, showing what local government can do when policy decisions play out in real lives.

At a regional level, the strength of collective action across 14 councils has been vital. A regional mailbox, job-matching service, and safeguarding infrastructure were put in place to fill the gaps where the system fell short. These efforts reflect both the scale of the challenge and the commitment to respond ethically and responsibly.



The experience has left important lessons. International recruitment has bought us time, but it has also revealed fragility. It highlighted how workforce interventions can quickly become safeguarding issues if ethical standards and compliance are not central. It showed that these must be integral, not optional. And it demonstrated that the support we have built for international care workers – onboarding, buddying, values-based guidance – can be used to strengthen our domestic workforce too.

Looking ahead, funding continues until March 2026, and Coventry will remain focused on supporting those already here. Regionally, however, the emphasis must now shift towards transition and sustainability.

As one worker said,

“I don’t want others to go through what I went through. We need to learn.”

That is our responsibility – to learn, to adapt, and to use what has been built to create something more sustainable. International recruitment was never the full answer, but it has been a significant chapter. The challenge now is to take what we have learned to create a more resilient social care system.

Pete’s reflections are timely, as next month the International Recruitment Programme 2024/25 Evaluation will be published. What has been built for international care workers offers lessons we can carry forward nationally, shaping a sustainable domestic workforce for the future.



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FUNDING FOR 2025/26 INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT PROGRAMME

3,505

support requests from care workers received in 15 months



284

care providers expressed interest in employing displaced workers



273

displaced care workers supported into new employment



Over 9,400

people have accessed the International Recruitment Hub since March 2024



Over 350

calls to the Legal & Human Resources Helpline since January 2025



Hundreds

of Care Providers have attended/watched a West Midlands IR Legal & HR Webinar this year



Over 1,000

international care workers using the MyUKLife platform since December 2024



4,505

chat sessions with AI coaches, via MyUKLife, providing access to employment, community, social care and other advice and support



843

care workers have accessed help via MyUKLife to improve CV and job interview skills



We are pleased to confirm that funding has been secured to continue delivery of the International Recruitment (IR) Programme, commissioned by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) under the 2025/26 International Recruitment Regional Fund for the Adult Social Care Sector.

The programme supports providers to remain compliant, helps reduce exploitation, and ensures international care workers in the UK can access the right support.

Building on the strong foundations of previous years, the next phase of the West Midlands International Recruitment Programme will continue to provide:

International Recruitment Hub:

This will provide access to resources and signpost international care workers, local authorities, and providers to relevant support.



My UK Life:

The online platform for international care workers to ask questions and access tailored signposting to support.



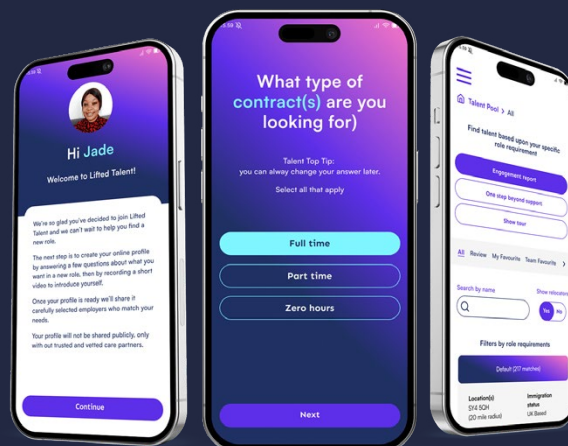
Legal & HR Webinars:

West Midlands Employers (WME), working with legal firm Lester Aldridge, will continue to deliver a series of webinars covering key legal issues for providers and local authorities (dates and topics to follow).



Job Matching via Lifted:

Lifted has been successfully procured as the regional provider for 2025/26, introducing new features from 1st September 2025 that reflect both recent policy changes and feedback from local authorities and service users (more information below).



We are also pleased to continue supporting Local Authority-led initiatives, with enhanced offer funding. For example, Sandwell has enhanced its offer to support anti-exploitation programmes.

Together with our delivery partners, we remain committed to ensuring the IR Programme continues to deliver meaningful outcomes for care providers, local authorities and for international care workers across the region

[Read the article below for key updates and improvements for 2025/26 from a job matching perspective.](#)



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IMMIGRATION RULE CHANGES FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE



From 22 July 2025, overseas recruitment into adult social care roles officially ended following the Home Office's recent Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules (HC 997).

While new overseas recruitment routes will close, a transition period runs until July 2028, allowing in-country workers on eligible visas to switch roles or sponsors. Importantly, international care workers already legally employed in the UK will retain rights to extend, switch, and apply for settlement.

Key Opportunity:

Although providers are no longer required to demonstrate engagement with the displaced worker pool, this remains a valuable channel for accessing experienced international candidates already

in the UK. Regional partnerships – including here in the West Midlands – continue to provide support in matching displaced workers to suitable care roles.

The full documents, from the government, are available here:

Statement of Changes to the Immigration Rules (HC 997)



Explanatory Memorandum



Ministerial Written Statement



Recruiting International Care Workers Already in the UK and Job Matching Support

We are pleased to confirm the successful procurement of Lifted as the regional job matching provider to support delivery of the 2025–26 International Recruitment (IR) Programme. The new International Recruitment Programme year (2025–26) has provided an opportunity, through the procurement process, to reflect both recent policy changes and feedback from Local Authorities and service users in the ongoing evolution of the region's job-matching service.

The team will be building on the great work that has already taken place over the last six months, with several new features being introduced and improvements being made.

These include:

Provider Engagement:

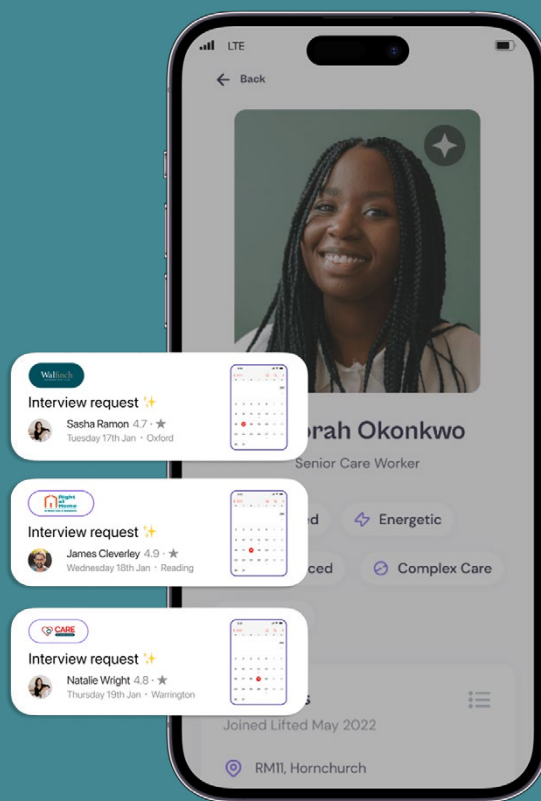
Includes structured support, webinars, ethical infrastructure, and a dedicated point of contact.

Worker Engagement:

Features mobile app onboarding, video introductions, in-person engagement, and feedback loops.

Strategic Engagement:

Covers collaboration with local authorities and DHSC, safeguarding referrals, and AI-enabled risk assessments.



LIFTED JOB MATCHING SUPPORT IN THE WEST MIDLANDS – THOUSANDS OF CARE WORKERS REGISTERED

COS Applications

For many care providers, the biggest headache in recruitment has been securing a Certificate of Sponsorship (COS). Lifted has listened to this feedback and reshaped the support to make the process easier – including funding the first two months of the compliance service for 200 providers. This helps you get COS applications over the line faster and bring new carers into post without delay.

Access to thousands of pre-screened carers

Alongside this, the FREE Lifted Find service continues to give providers direct access to quality, pre-screened carers in the West Midlands. With 4,566 candidates locally (and 31,666 nationwide) currently registered on the platform, all checked to determine who has car ownership and a UK driving licence, providers can connect quickly with potential workers.

The results are encouraging, with 200 displaced workers in the region finding new sponsors in the last 5 months, significantly exceeding the targets set.

Care providers have told us clearly what they need: faster routes to sponsorship and better access to the right candidates. Lifted has worked with us to make immediate changes, simplifying the process and removing barriers, with the goal to match great people with great employers, speed up the recruitment process so you can ultimately focus on what matters most: delivering care.

We also know that engagement matters. Lifted is already present at many of the West Midlands international recruitment related events and to strengthen this, the team are in the process of recruiting a dedicated regional contact to give providers and international care workers in the West Midlands a single, trusted point of support. They are also introducing Care Providers Weekly – a weekly e-newsletter which will contain really relevant content and focus on ‘what you need to know’.

- 1. Lifted Find** (FREE – funded as part of the West Midlands International Recruitment Programme until the end of March 2025) – helping you connect directly with quality, pre-screened carers (identifying those with cars and UK driving licences), avoiding unsuitable applications, cars and UK driving licences), avoiding unsuitable applications.
- 2. Lifted Comply Light** (£99/month per person hired +VAT) Lifted handles everything from compliance documents and Certification of Sponsorship to housing and worker support, and pays all up front sponsorship fees for three years.
- 3. Lifted Comply** (£249/month + VAT): Compliance support for up to 10 sponsored staff, including one COS application attempt (request can be for up to 20 CoS) and practical assistance with sponsor compliance processes.

Special offer: First 2 months is funded free, for the first 200 care providers (12-month commitment).

Next steps for providers

If you are recruiting or struggling with compliance, now is the time to act – funding for two months free compliance support is limited to 200 providers.

LIVE WEBINAR - 14th October, 11am-12pm

Join us for a special webinar where Rachael Crook, CEO of Lifted, will share key updates to the Lifted job matching platform.

This webinar will:

Walk you through the latest Lifted platform changes

Highlight new support available to providers

Demonstrate how to connect with international carer workers quickly and effectively to strengthen your workforce

Register now

Warning Over Extra Hours for International Care Workers

Care providers are being urged to carry out proper checks when offering extra hours to international care staff, after growing concerns that some are breaching visa rules, leading to sponsorship loss and service disruption.

Workers on Skilled Worker and Health and Care Worker visas can take on up to 20 hours a week in supplementary roles, but only if the job is in an eligible occupation and the individual continues to work for their main sponsor. Anything beyond this, or in a role outside the permitted codes, requires a new Certificate of Sponsorship and a visa update before the work can begin.

With some sponsors unable to provide sufficient contracted hours, or in cases where licences have been revoked, workers are increasingly relying on supplementary roles. Without proper oversight, this creates significant compliance risks.

Employers should check:

- The worker remains employed by their primary sponsor.
- The role is an eligible occupation under visa rules.
- The 20-hour weekly limit is not exceeded, with hours properly recorded.
- Their organisation is appropriately registered (e.g. with the CQC in England).

Getting these checks right is essential to protect both care provision and workers' visa status.

OVERSEAS RECRUITMENT MAY HAVE CEASED – BUT ETHICAL RECRUITMENT MATTERS NOW MORE THAN EVER

Recruitment is one of the most important decisions any care provider makes. The way staff are recruited not only shapes workforce stability but also reflects directly on the values of the organisation. While international recruitment often takes the spotlight when we talk about “ethical recruitment”, the principles apply just as strongly to all recruitment practices – whether hiring UK based international care workers or hiring locally.

At its heart, ethical recruitment means:

- Ensuring fairness and transparency for candidates
- Avoiding exploitative or coercive practices
- Protecting the reputation of care providers and the wider sector
- Building long-term workforce sustainability

Beyond recruitment – why ongoing ethical practices matter

Ethical recruitment isn't just about sourcing staff responsibly it is also about ensuring fair, lawful, and sustainable employment practices throughout their time with a provider. This is required in order to avoid pitfalls that may lead to loss of sponsorship licences, service disruption, or harm to service users and staff's wellbeing.



Ethical recruitment across the board

Ethical recruitment extends to staff already living in the UK. It is important to apply the same high standards when filling any role, including:

- Transparent job descriptions and fair interviews
- Contracts that reflect agreed terms without hidden conditions
- Proper induction, supervision, and ongoing support

By applying these standards consistently, providers protect themselves against reputational, legal, and workforce risks – while strengthening the appeal of social care as a career.

Tools to support you



Here is a reminder of some of the resources on our International Recruitment Hub's Ethical Recruitment page:

- **A Practical Guide: Choosing an Ethical Supplier – helping providers to select Managed Service Providers (MSPs) and agencies that adhere to ethical recruitment standards.**
- **Two audit tools that help you assess and choose ethical suppliers**

These resources are designed to be simple, practical, and something you can use straight away, whether you're recruiting UK based international care staff or domestic staff.

You can access these resources via the International Recruitment Hub: irwestmids.co.uk/ethical-recruitment

A shared responsibility

By committing to high standards and making use of the available tools, together we can help create a fairer, more resilient workforce that benefits both staff and the people they care for.

SAFETY FIRST – INTELLIGENCE SHARING ACROSS THE WEST MIDLANDS

As a region, we are bringing local authorities and multi-agencies together to understand how we can better share information and work together to protect our communities and prevent exploitation.

Across the West Midlands, local authorities and partner agencies are working together to strengthen how we share intelligence to protect our communities and prevent exploitation.

A small task group is being set up, involving colleagues from local authorities and partners to explore how information can be shared safely across boundaries. The group will consider ways to flag concerns about organisations, individuals, or practices that may be unethical or exploitative, while ensuring data protection regulations are respected.

The aim is to improve collaboration, share only what is necessary, and support local authorities and care providers to ensure workers and communities are better protected.



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SUPPORTING OUR WORKFORCE - PREVENTING EXPLOITATION AND DRIVING ETHICAL RECRUITMENT



You will have seen lots of the coverage in the media around immigration, with protests and the riots. This is an issue for our sector.

The National Care Forum has shared that they are receiving many reports indicating that care workers feel unwelcome when seeing 'the flags', even if they've worked here a long time. They also say they feel unsafe at night if they were working close to asylum seeker hotel protest areas. It's really important we work together to ensure all of our workers feel supported.

As an employer there are some practical things you can do – this includes regularly checking in on your international care staff to see how they are and whether there is any support they need.

We are committed to building and sustaining a care workforce that our communities can rely on. International recruitment has been pivotal in achieving this goal, and we have made significant strides in embedding ethical recruitment practices and strengthening skills in the sector. However, there are challenges in this rapidly changing environment, and we need to work together to build workforce capacity and strengthen community resilience.

There are several proactive initiatives currently underway, which we are keen to share. These include:



Ongoing work with the post-riots group, which is focused on resilience and recovery.

Following five workshops with colleagues immediately impacted by the August 2024 riots, experts with lived experience, and wider colleagues, and the subsequent West Midlands ADASS report to Directors, we have introduced proactive initiatives such as learning and sharing best practices, champions and allyship, psychological safety, and leveraging the power of storytelling. Our next workshops will include reflections on the most recent protests.



The Migration Advisory Committee's request to the Cavendish Coalition to develop an alternative international recruitment route, distinct from the Health and Care Worker and Skilled Worker visas, to allow for greater flexibility in meeting workforce needs;

This initiative aims to provide greater flexibility in meeting workforce needs and is crucial in addressing workforce shortages. With an insufficient domestic workforce to meet future needs (we would need to employ every school leaver), this alternative route is essential for ensuring a diverse and skilled workforce.



A number of national initiatives on social cohesion, with active engagement from the WM-ADASS Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Network.

We are actively engaged in national initiatives on social cohesion, including our WMADASS and ADASS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Networks, and work with wider partners (e.g. RCN, UNISON, Skills for Care), the Angela Rayner report, British Future and Belong network (The State of Us) and British Red Cross Building Bridges. These initiatives focus on building and sustaining the care workforce, supporting international care workers, and promoting inclusivity within our communities and workplaces, and wider society.

Amplifying Lived Experience – VOICE Panel & My UK Life

The new VOICE Panel, created by the West Midlands Anti-Slavery Network and led by survivors, empowers people with lived experience of modern slavery to shape anti-slavery strategies across the region.

The new web page hosts resources, FAQs, and guidance on how you can get involved.



Coming soon: My UK Life – Share Your Voice.

International care workers will be able to call or go online, speak in their own language, and share their story.

Voices will be translated and shared with decision-makers to highlight challenges and successes across the care sector.



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TACKLING EXPLOITATION AND PROMOTING ETHICAL RECRUITMENT

In addition, Debbie Huxton, Modern Slavery and Violence Prevention Programme Manager at Sandwell Council, is coordinating our regional councils' efforts to tackle exploitation.

Our International Recruitment Programme's Lunch and Learn series, aimed at local authorities, and ongoing legal webinars are affirmative actions against exploitation in international recruitment within the care sector. By triangulating known intelligence on unethical employers and utilising council soft intelligence, safeguarding reports, CQC ratings, and council quality assurance mechanisms, we will ensure high standards in recruitment practices and safeguard both international recruits and the domestic workforce.

Debbie will also be leading a Quarterly Webinar Series designed to build awareness, share best practice, and foster collaboration across local authorities, care providers and agencies working across the region.



Webinar 1: Why Now? The urgency of addressing exploitation in international recruitment

Date: 20 October 2025, 2:30pm to 4:00pm

Speakers will include Debbie Huxton (Sandwell MBC), a representative from the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) and survivor testimony. They will discuss:

- Current trends and risks
- Legal and ethical responsibilities
- The human impact of exploitation

**Register
now**

Webinar 2: Spotting the Signs: Early Identification and Intervention

19 January 2026 – 2:30pm to 4:00pm

Speakers will include a social work practitioner, NHS safeguarding lead and labour market enforcement expert. They will discuss:

- Key indicators of exploitation
- Case examples
- Practical tools for frontline staff

**Register
now**

Webinar 3: 23 March 2026 – 2:30pm to 4:00pm

19 January 2026 – 2:30pm to 4:00pm

Speakers will include someone from the Police Modern Slavery Unit, a Local Authority Safeguarding Board representative and NGO or charity supporting international care workers. They will discuss how we can strengthen collaboration across agencies and will cover:

- Multi-agency case studies
- Information sharing protocols
- Building stronger local safeguarding networks

**Register
now**



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Resources on Wellbeing, Safeguarding & Preventing Exploitation

Don't forget: there are lots of useful resources available to support wellbeing, safeguarding, and ethical recruitment practices. Here we signpost to some of the support available...

Directory for Safeguarding and Wellbeing Services

You can access our Safeguarding and Wellbeing Directory, listing key safeguarding and wellbeing services across the West Midlands and nationally. It includes:

- Organisations to contact if you are concerned about yourself or an individual
- Organisations to report if you need to report or are concerned about an employer

This resource offers quick access to information, support, and action – because safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**Your directory for
safeguarding and
wellbeing services
in the West Midlands
and nationally**



CLICK HERE TO VIEW OUR NEW SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING DIRECTORY



West Midlands Prompt Cards for Safeguarding Issues Associated With International Recruitment

We have designed two prompt cards to support local authorities, in relation to international recruitment, with internal information sharing when they are concerned about individuals caught up or victims of modern slavery/exploitation or organisations involved in modern unethical employment.

- **Unethical Recruitment Practices:** A prompt card to aid internal communication when there are concerns about a care providers recruitment practices of international care workers.
- **Safety & Welfare of International Care Workers:** A prompt card to assist internal communication when concerns arise regarding the safety and well-being of an international care worker.

These prompt cards are designed to help make sure concerns are escalated to the correct teams efficiently and effectively.



VIEW OUR PROMPT CARDS HERE



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FREE LEGAL & HUMAN RESOURCES SUPPORT FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES & CARE PROVIDERS IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

Stay informed on key legal aspects from sponsorship obligations to safeguarding care workers' rights. Our FAQs and monthly webinars, compiled by law firm Lester Aldridge, are designed to help Local Authorities and Care Providers build effective and ethical recruitment processes.

Free Legal & HR Webinars – Extended to March 2026

Lester Aldridge hosts monthly international recruitment webinars exclusively for West Midlands local authorities and care providers.

- **Free to attend** – simply register in advance
- **Live Q&A** – get your questions answered by legal experts
- **On-demand access** – revisit past webinars any time

23rd October, 11am-12:15pm

The Changing Landscape of International Recruitment: Legal and HR Essentials

The landscape of international recruitment in social care is changing fast.

While opportunities remain to recruit international care workers already in the UK, keeping up to date with the latest legislative shifts is vital.

This webinar offers a clear recap and practical checklist to help providers stay compliant, ethical, and effective.

Register
now



 Lester
Aldridge

Catch Up on Our 2025 Webinar Series

Past webinars include everything from the roll out to e-visas to pay and redundancy and the new employment rights bill.

Recordings and slides are available exclusively for West Midlands-based care providers and local authorities [via the WMCA event page](#).

You will have been sent the Password – however, if you cannot find this please email hello@wmca.international

Free Legal & HR Helpline – available until the end of March 2026

Our Legal & HR helpline, run by law firm Lester Aldridge, is available to all CQC registered care providers and local authorities in the West Midlands.

If you are a West Midlands based Local Authority or Care Provider and have an international recruitment related question, please email WMIRHelpline@la-law.com

Providers and local authorities are entitled to 30 minutes FREE consultation in respect of a query.

International Care Workers

All West Midlands International Care Workers who have been displaced or are at risk will be entitled to 30 minutes FREE consultation in respect of a query.

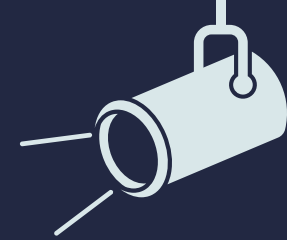
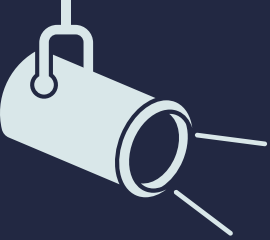
To access the Free Legal & Human Resources support, international care workers living in the West Midlands need to have first registered with regional mailbox www.revoked.support to get the WMIRP number and then request legal support: www.wmca.care/p2c/legal

This service will be provided by Legal and HR professionals who have extensive experience in international recruitment.



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SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON

Local Authority Led Events & Practical Resources

Strengthening Support for Care Providers Driving remains a critical challenge for care

Driving is a huge challenge for many care providers. Employers often ask for drivers because care workers may need to cover multiple visits in more rural areas in one day – something that is almost impossible to do efficiently by bus. This affects not only international care workers but also domestic workers.

Councils and care providers have tried lots of different innovative efforts to help tackle the lack of drivers, finding enough people with licences and cars. These include:

- Coventry City Council: The team have developed tailored guidance to help international care workers step by step through the UK driving process. This includes: why a licence is so important for skilled workers; the requirements for booking a test; preparing for the theory exam with study resources; getting ready for the practical test; advice for the big day (including using your own car); post-test steps such as insurance and driving independently; and final tips and Q&A. This practical support helps recruits gain the confidence and knowledge they need, but the challenge of securing enough drivers remains.
- Coventry Police recently ran a webinar for providers on driving licences and insurance, highlighting key risks and responsibilities for care staff using their own cars and indeed care providers. Lynn Bassett, International Recruitment Lead at Warwickshire County Council, is in the process of arranging a follow-up session with Warwickshire Police, which will provide even clearer guidance on business insurance and transporting clients. We will share more information about this over the coming months.
- In Solihull, the council has made “Transport Solutions” a key strand of its Adult Social Care Workforce Strategy, piloting sustainable travel options for care staff. Volunteer driver schemes also support residents by using trained locals to take people to vital appointments. Alongside this, providers in different areas have trialled car-pooling and shared vehicle schemes.

As a region, we continue to highlight the challenge around driving when it comes to delivering care and have requested that care workers are given priority driving tests.



Helping staff make use of everyday slang

New Slang Booklet for Care Workers

A new Slang Booklet has been created to help international and new staff navigate the everyday language they may hear from clients and colleagues. It features a collection of words and phrases unique to Warwickshire and other parts of the UK – many of which don't appear in standard dictionaries and can sometimes be considered impolite or rude.

The booklet offers a practical introduction to commonly used slang terms, covering areas such as:

- Body parts
- Clothes
- Death and bereavement
- Family members
- Food and drink
- Greetings
- Money
- Sleep
- Toileting and bodily functions

By familiarising themselves with these phrases, international care workers and care workers more generally can improve communication, avoid misunderstandings, and feel more confident in day-to-day interactions.



[Download the Slang Booklet](#)



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SHINING A SPOTLIGHT ON

Practical Support, Real Partnerships: How Warwickshire is Helping International Care Workers

In Warwickshire, International Recruitment Lead Lynn Bassett has built a practical, face-to-face support offer that helps providers manage risk, stay compliant, and keep international care workers safe, informed, and work-ready.

Lynn works incredibly closely with Coventry City Council to organise face-to-face events as many people working in Warwickshire live in Coventry and vice versa.

Their approach blends legal access, hands-on advice, targeted training, and cross-agency problem-solving.

Here are some of the things Warwickshire County Council are doing to support care providers and international care workers...



Lynn says,

"We are conscious our care providers are operating in a shifting landscape: policy changes, inconsistent practice, inspection pressure, and workforce uncertainty. International colleagues are feeling the strain too, navigating visas, employment rights, driving and insurance rules, and day-to-day expectations in care settings. Our goal is to do what we can to reduce uncertainty where we can and convert lessons learned into clear, usable support."



A. Weekly drop-ins for international care workers with guaranteed legal access

- Co-delivered with Tulia and Coventry City Council, at Central Hall, on Thursdays.
- International care workers are guaranteed time with a legal adviser and the team signpost to employment support.

B. Rapid, practical help when people are in crisis

- On occasion, immediate welfare support has been provided, for example food provisions, while formal routes are put in place.

C. Targeted training that fits real care work

- English Language and Culture Training for Social Care: Sector-specific communication, including everyday language used in care.
- Values-Based Training: A four-part webinar series delivered with Tulia. These focused on:
 - The Values and Principles of the UK: This explored the core British values, Democracy, Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Respect, and Tolerance – and their role in professional caregiving.
 - What is the UK?: This online training session explored the UK's geography, nations, and diversity – and their impact on fostering inclusive and respectful professional environments.
 - Understanding Cultural Intelligence (CQ): This online training session explores Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and how it enhances the care provided to elderly individuals in the UK, including those from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

- The UK Government, Law, and Your Role as a Carer: This online training session explored the UK Government, legal framework, and the responsibilities of carers working within the care sector.
- Cooking for care contexts: Lynn and her team are in the process of organising some practical, face-to-face, sessions focusing on safe, culturally aware, client-pleasing meals and presentation. These are being designed and delivered in response to provider and care worker feedback.

The goal is to support international care workers in developing the practical skills needed to meet client expectations around food and presentation, while also creating opportunities for them to connect with one another, build confidence, and reduce the isolation that can come with working in more rural areas.

- Ready-to-use resources to can share with teams
- Social care slang guide: This is designed to bridge real-world language gaps in homes and the community. We include an article about this below.
- Dictionary of social care terms: The team are in the process of developing this to support accurate recording and confidence with clinical and common social care terms.
- Seasonal safety briefings for staff: Lynn and her team share seasonal safety briefing that can be shared with international care workers. These include, the importance of hydration in summer; winter driving kits; year-round vehicle checks and "what to keep in the car."

How providers can engage today

- Refer international care workers living in Warwickshire or Coventry to the Thursday drop-ins at Central Hall (Coventry) for guaranteed legal advice plus local employment support.
- Share the resources with your teams (the slang guide is available now and the dictionary will follow).
- Book onto the next police webinar and cascade the driving/insurance guidance into your supervision and onboarding (information to follow).

A note on partnership

Lynn highlights the importance of building great partnerships. She says,

"None of this works without collaboration. Tulia's community leadership, local police expertise, provider openness, and the lived experience of international colleagues are all central in making sure we deliver practical support that works."

TULIA CONFERENCE 2025: SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL CARE WORKERS IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

On 29 August, the Tulia Conference 2025 brought together legal experts, union representatives, community leaders, and international care workers themselves to address the real challenges facing those on the frontline of health and social care.



For care providers and local authorities across the West Midlands, the event offered an important reminder: international care workers are vital to our sector, but too often face barriers that affect both their wellbeing and their ability to deliver care.

A highlight of the day was the screening of Oluwa's Story as a Healthcare Skilled Worker, a moving video that brings to the forefront the lived experience of an international care worker. This a powerful reminder that behind every role is a person.



CLICK HERE TO WATCH VIDEO

Local voices were at the heart of the discussion. Simon Veasey, International Recruitment Lead at Coventry, and Lynn Bassett from Warwickshire joined the speaker line-up, sharing insights on workforce pressures and the importance of supportive employer practices. Their contributions reinforced the message that regional collaboration is key to building fair, resilient workplaces.

Lynn said,

"Working with Tulia has been a real asset – being able to say to international care workers to go to the Central Hall on a Thursday and you'll be guaranteed to speak to a legal advisor makes such a difference – they value to face-to-face support."



After the event, a woman approached Simon for help finding a new sponsor in Coventry. She had a Level 5 qualification, a well-prepared CV, and crucially, a full UK driving licence and her own car. Simon connected her with a couple of local employers, and within days she was interviewed and hired.

Simon says,

"This really shows the value of local connections in the care market and the importance of having the right skills. Too many people don't realise there are steps they can take to improve their chances while waiting to be re-sponsored."

Speakers explored pressing issues such as immigration rules, employment rights, safeguarding responsibilities, and the realities of family life for workers who have moved to the UK. Attendees also heard directly from workers with lived experience - highlighting the importance of listening, understanding, and acting to support those who care for our communities.

Alongside inspiring talks and cultural celebrations, the conference provided practical resources, one-to-one advice sessions, and networking opportunities. These tools are invaluable for employers looking to create safe, supportive environments for international care workers.

The message was clear: education, empowerment, and community are essential in helping care workers thrive. Employers and local authorities who engage with these issues will not only strengthen their workforce but also uphold their duty of care.

As the sector continues to rely on international recruitment, events like Tulia's underline the importance of partnership between workers, employers, and communities to ensure that care is both compassionate and sustainable.

LISTENING, LEARNING, AND SUPPORTING: DUDLEY HOSTS FIRST INTERNATIONAL CARE WORKERS EVENT

Earlier this summer, Dudley Council held its first dedicated event for international care workers, offering a space for face-to-face conversations, peer connection, and direct support.

The event brought together around 25–30 attendees alongside local stakeholders, charities, and service providers. It highlighted both the challenges faced by international care workers and the importance of collaborative support in helping them settle into life and work in the UK.



The idea for the event was inspired by a similar session in Coventry.

“We’d always had the intention of holding one ourselves but seeing Coventry’s event gave us that extra push - and it showed us which stakeholders we needed in the room to make it meaningful to our international care workers,”

said Joanne Basterfield, International Recruitment Lead at Dudley Council.

The Importance of Being Heard

One of the strongest themes from Dudley’s event was the value of personal contact. While email updates and formal guidance remain important, they cannot replace genuine human connection.

“For some of these international recruits, their situations are really desperate,” said Joanne. “It’s one thing to get an email, but it’s another to sit down face to face with someone who is listening. One lady who attended just wouldn’t stop hugging me - she was so grateful. It just showed the importance of being present.”

Many attendees brought family members, underlining how international recruitment is not just about jobs or individuals but lives. Discussions ranged from childcare and housing to access to health services. For some, expectations of a “new life” in the UK had been met with unexpected challenges, including financial pressures, unstable employment, and limited local networks - often outside of their control.



Practical Support on the Day

The event gathered a wide range of local organisations to provide “whole package” support. The Refugee and Migrant Centre (RMC) offered immigration advice and practical orientation - from CV writing help to simply showing newcomers where the bus stops and shops were. Public Health teams were present to give information on vaccinations and entitlements, while Straight Talk provided employability support and even food vouchers. Maximus, a mental health service, highlighted resources for emotional wellbeing.

Job-matching support was also in high demand and Joanne highlighted the need to manage expectations. “As soon as you mention a job possibility, people cling to it, and we have to be very careful, because not everything will materialise. Managing that hope is really challenging but important. This is why the support is so important.”

Building Peer Networks

Beyond professional advice, the event created a vital space for international workers to meet each other, share experiences, and build informal networks. Tables were set up to encourage conversation, with the aim of reducing isolation and enabling peer-to-peer support. Joanne explained how difficult it is for anyone to fully understand what displaced international care workers are going through. But someone else in the same situation can - and that’s powerful.

Looking Ahead

Given the positive response, Dudley is already planning a second event later this year. Joanne said, “Even if we can’t always find someone a job straightaway, we want them to know they’re not forgotten.”

At the heart of these efforts are the voices of international care workers themselves. As one displaced care worker at the event shared: “Working in care is something I am truly passionate about. I love that every day is different - I get to meet new people and support adults and the elderly, treating them with the same care and respect I would give my own family. I find real fulfilment in making a positive difference in their lives.”

Her story, like many others, is a reminder of the positive impact international care workers are having in our communities. It also shows that international recruitment is not just a workforce issue – it is about people, families, and the shared humanity at the heart of care.



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SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL CARE WORKERS IN COVENTRY & WARWICKSHIRE

Coventry City Council and Warwickshire County Council continue to play a huge role in supporting international care workers and their families. In July, around 50–60 people attended the most recent community drop in event for international care workers and their children.

Simon Veasey, International Recruitment Lead, at Coventry City Council says, “We have a responsibility to the family as well as the international recruit – and it is clear from our events and the interaction we have with international care workers in our area just how many young children are impacted.”

This responsibility doesn't stop neatly at city boundaries. In practice, Coventry and Warwickshire are closely interconnected – many care workers employed in Warwickshire choose to live in Coventry, where housing is often more affordable. With such porous boundaries, it makes sense to work hand in hand across the two local authority areas to support international care workers and their families.

Focus on health and wellbeing

The latest Coventry City Council event, hosted at Coventry Rugby Club with partner Warwickshire County Council, was designed to move beyond jobs and recruitment, focusing on keeping workers and their families safe, healthy and connected. NHS speakers delivered talks on diabetes, TB, HIV, vaccinations, sexual health and workplace mental health, while a wide range of partners – from Citizens Advice Bureau to MIND and Lifted – offered practical guidance.

The importance of face-to-face support

For many workers, the greatest impact came simply from being in the room with someone who would listen. “People will tell you much more face to face than they'll ever write down. Sitting down together shows care and respect and that's when safeguarding issues or financial struggles come to light – things people would never put in an email” says Simon.

Workers' pride can also be a barrier. Some are reluctant to ask for help with basics like food or housing support. Face-to-face contact helps to navigate stigma and restore dignity, offering permission to accept support.

Community networks keeping people afloat

Coventry City Council recognises the critical role that churches and voluntary organisations are also playing. Simon says these churches are not always easy to identify and are sometimes hard to reach but without their support, many international care workers simply wouldn't survive.

Immense family pressure

Behind every story are families who have made extraordinary sacrifices. Simon talked about one international care worker who sold everything she owned to come here – her house, her car, all her possessions. She told Simon she can't go back because she owes so much money and that her children have said they'll run away or kill themselves if they have to go back – they're settled here in school, with friends.

Others face rejection from home. One worker was told bluntly: “If you can't get us to London, don't come back. You better die there.”

You can hear more in this short video: Coventry City Council & Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council share what they've been hearing and learning from international care workers.

Risks of exploitation

With limited care jobs available and strict visa rules, some international care workers have been drawn into informal or unsafe work out of desperation. Others face exploitation within the care system itself. Simon described a case where an employer offered to sponsor a worker's children – but then demanded repayment of £35,000 and withheld training certificates to stop her leaving.

He is quick to point out this is not the norm. “We have some fantastic employers but we need to work together to ensure the right safeguarding measures are in place..”



Building resilience and moving forward

Alongside larger community events, Coventry has been running practical sessions on everyday challenges such as driving – from applying for a UK licence, to booking a test, to understanding the costs of getting on the road. These sessions help workers navigate a system that is very different to what they are used to back home, and driving often proves to be the key to securing employment.

The city has also launched a new Support Programme for International care workers – a free, three-month offer combining one-to-one coaching, monthly wellbeing workshops, peer support circles, and tailored resources. Designed for small groups of participants, the programme provides both online and in-person support to build confidence, reduce isolation, and give care workers a clear sense of their rights and opportunities in the UK.

Looking ahead

Coventry City Council is now looking at holding smaller drop-ins and peer support groups. The council has also coordinated legal advice sessions, housing and employment support, and health outreach to give workers a safe place to ask questions and feel seen and heard.

As recruiting from overseas has come to an end, looking ahead, Coventry's (and Warwickshire's) challenge is now how to support the existing international care workers and manage the wider workforce requirements in a sustainable way – through supporting local young people, migrants and refugees into care roles. The city's experience shows the value of a joined-up local response that recognises the pressures international care workers face and works alongside them with dignity.

