Board meeting

19 July 2023

Modern slavery and human trafficking

Purpose of paper

For approval.

Board action required

The Board is asked to:

* 1. receive the report and approve the revised modern slavery and human trafficking statement for publication on NICE’s website.

Brief summary

The purpose of this paper is to share a draft modern slavery and human trafficking statement for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Board sponsor

Boryana Stambolova, interim Director, finance

Introduction

1. Modern Slavery is an umbrella term that encompasses the offences of human trafficking and slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour, as set out in the different anti‑slavery legislation in place in the UK. The Home Office states that modern slavery frequently involves multiple victims and offenders, and it is often hidden and involves or takes place alongside a wide range of abuses and other criminal offences.

Key issues

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires commercial organisations over a certain size to publish a statement each year setting out what action the organisation has taken during the financial year to prevent modern slavery in their business and supply chain. NICE is not yet required to do so but does so voluntarily along with many other public bodies. Attached is the draft statement following the 2022/23 financial year.

A risk assessment has also been developed with the help of HR and commercial team colleagues which concludes the risk of modern slavery to NICE is low due to the nature of our work, but staff must remain vigilant. The potential risk areas are recruitment and contracts with third parties. A short training session is available to teams to raise awareness and confirm reporting routes if anyone does have any concerns.

Board action required

The Board is asked to:

* 1. Receive the report and approve the modern slavery and human trafficking statement.

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July 2023

Modern slavery and human trafficking statement

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) is a non-departmental public body established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Our core purpose is to help practitioners and commissioners get the best care to patients fast, while ensuring value for the taxpayer.

Find out more about our structure and [what we do](https://www.nice.org.uk/about/what-we-do).

We fully support the government’s objective to eradicate slavery and human trafficking and acknowledge our role in combating it. We are strongly committed to making sure our supply chains and business activities are free from ethical and labour standards abuse.

We act ethically and with the highest standards of integrity, quality, probity, openness, and accountability in all our business operations and relationships.

Steps we take:

People

All staff are appointed subject to references, health checks, immigration checks and identity checks. We work closely with our third party recruitment provider to ensure they undertake rigorous checks on our behalf. This makes sure we are confident staff have a legal right to work for us before they start.

By adopting national pay and terms and conditions of service, we have assurance that all staff will be treated equally and fairly, and our terms comply with the latest legislation. This includes the assurance that staff receive, at least, the National Minimum Wage.

We have employment policies and procedures in place designed to provide guidance and advice to staff and managers, and which comply with employment legislation. All policies and procedures are available to all staff on our intranet. They are also supported by training sessions for managers.

Our equality, diversity and inclusion, grievance, and dignity at work policies and procedures give a platform for our staff to raise concerns about poor working practices. We have Freedom to Speak Up Guardians available as an avenue for staff to raise issues of concern in confidence, and plan to supplement these with Freedom to Speak Up Ambassadors in 2023/24.

We’re strongly committed to equality, diversity and inclusion and creating a non-discriminatory and respectful working environment for our staff. We have a set of values and behaviours that all staff are expected to comply with. Job applicants are expected to demonstrate these attributes in the recruitment process.

We have targets in place to deliver our workforce equality objectives for 2020-24. All staff are required to undertake mandatory staff training in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

Whistleblowing

Our whistleblowing policy gives staff a platform to raise concerns for further investigation. It also offers support to anyone who has suffered fiscal or professional detriment as a result of whistleblowing.

Procurement and our supply chains

Our procurement approach for our most common areas of spend follow the Crown Commercial Service frameworks which provides an assurance of compliance with procurement best practice and in all our tenders we include a mandatory requirement to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

When procuring goods and services, we additionally apply terms and conditions which require suppliers to comply with relevant legislation.

All procurement staff follow the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply ethical code in procurement. Ethical and staffing issues form a key part of our induction for new entrants to the procurement team.

Looking forward:

We will publish our Modern Slavery statement on the NICE website and we will continue to assess and monitor potential risk areas in modern slavery and human trafficking.

During 2023/24, we will:

* Support all staff to understand what steps to take to prevent modern slavery. This includes increasing awareness of reporting mechanisms for raising concerns.
* Arrange staff briefings for specific teams where the exposure to modern slavery is higher.
* Review our risk assessment of NICE’s exposure to modern slavery and human trafficking and work with key teams to keep this updated.
* Continue to use central government procurement frameworks (both Crown Commercial Service and NHS frameworks) all of which have the highest levels of assurance and are updated in line with emerging policy developments, giving a high degree of confidence that the supply chain is compliant.
* Continue to support contract managers to assess risks throughout the commercial life cycle.
* Explore how to seek greater assurance from suppliers on their compliance with modern slavery legislation when undertaking procurement outside of centralised frameworks.

We will review this statement annually.

Reporting concerns

Modern Slavery Helpline on tel: 08000 121 700 or at: www.modernslaveryhelpline.org. The Helpline provides information and advice about modern slavery, a 24 hour telephone reporting line and an online reporting function through the website.

Related policies and documents

Contract management framework and guidance.

Whistleblowing policy.

Recruitment and selection policy.

Grievance policy.

Dignity at Work policy.

Dr Sam Roberts

Chief Executive

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (“the Act”) and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking Statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2023. *It was approved by the board on 19 July 2023.*