



Gangmasters &
Labour Abuse Authority

Modern Slavery and Exploitation within the Care Sector

Phil Cain KPM – Director of Operations

Stopping worker exploitation

The Facts

Modern Slavery is a global problem and is an international Crime

Despite being illegal in every Country in the Modern World, slavery still exists, affecting millions of people worldwide, including many victims in the UK.

All incidents of Modern Slavery include two basic elements; The DECEPTION or COERCION of an individual for the purpose of exploitation. This includes a number of illegal and unethical practises, such as HUMAN TRAFFICKING, FORCED and COMPULSORY Labour, DEBT Bondage, SERVITUDE and FORCED MARRIAGE.



Key elements of Exploitation



Recruitment of Victims – Fraud, coercion (fear /threats) cultural hierarchy – Debt Bondage

Direction/control over where they live – excessive rent for overcrowded and poor accommodation

Control of movements to and from work and movement from house generally – use of Alpha ‘Males’

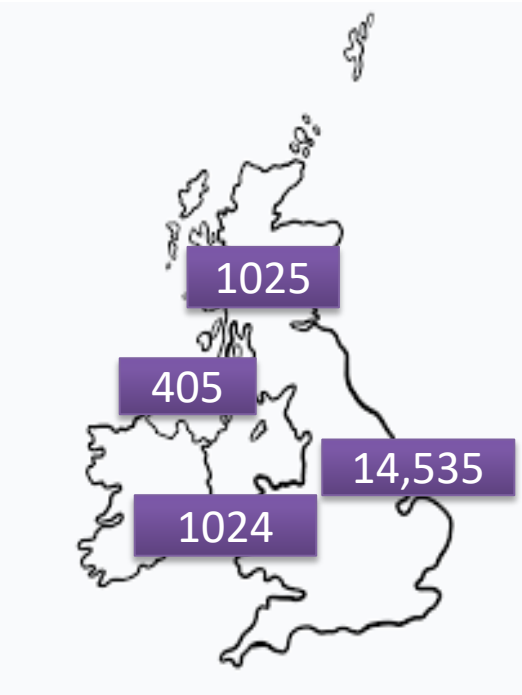
Control of wages and bank accounts – may even control their work allocation – work finding and retention fees

Restrict their contact with neighbours/community and even access to Doctors and Dentists

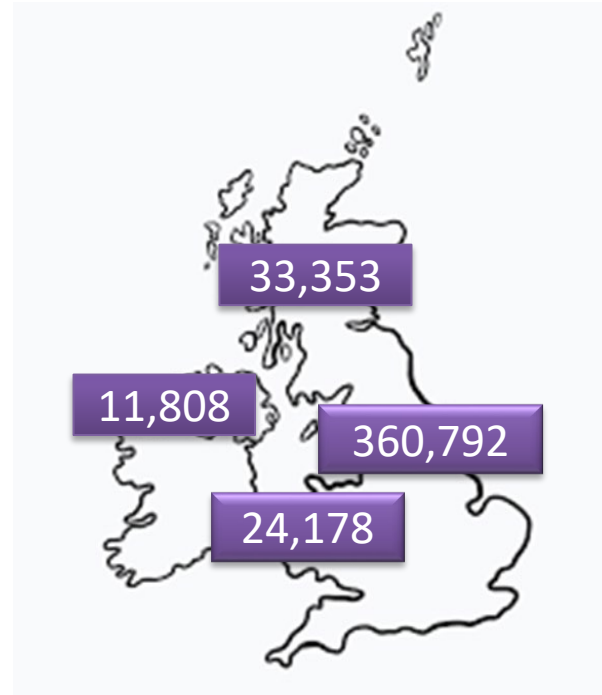
The true extent of Modern Slavery is still unknown – BUT IT EXISTS IN EVERY COMMUNITY!



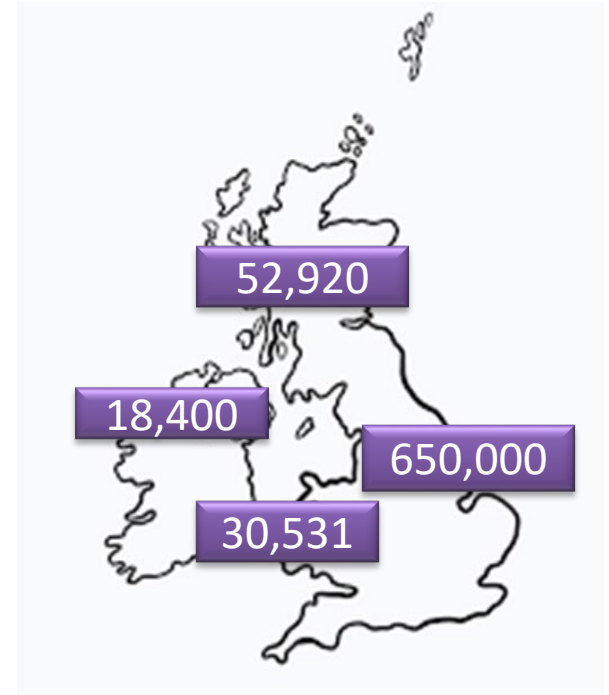
Care Homes in the UK



Population in Care Homes



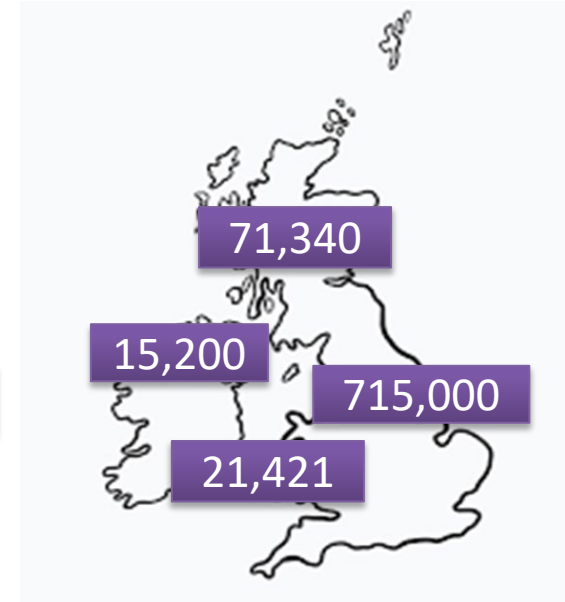
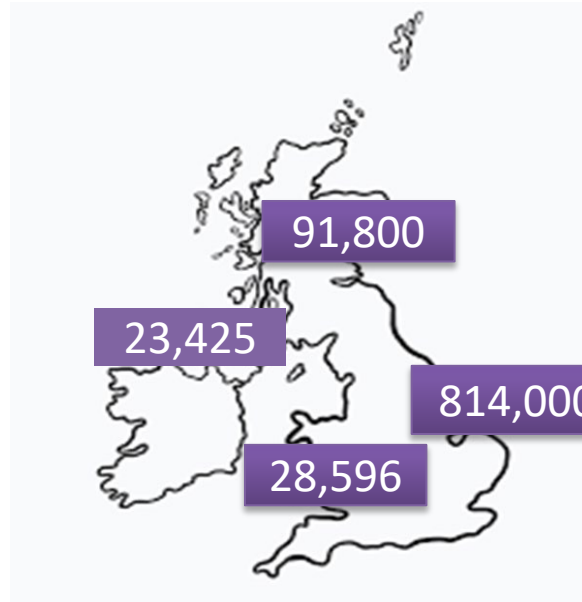
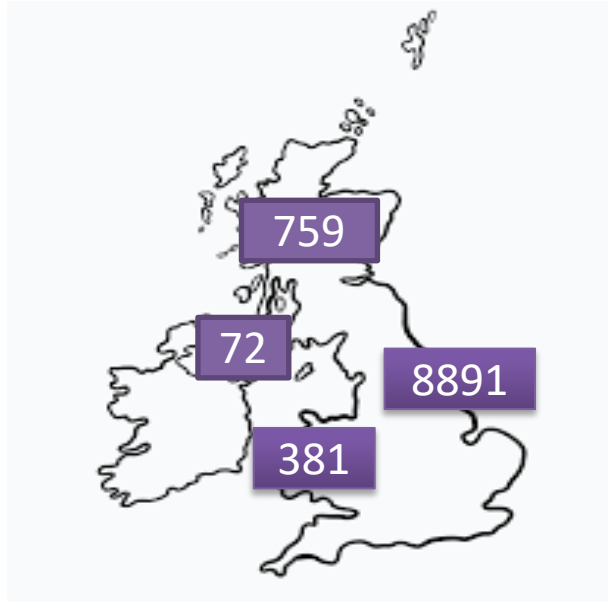
Work Force within Care Homes



Home care providers

Number of people receiving Home Care

workers providing Home Care



Operation Narial



Exploitation of Victims

- Use of cultural and Community Contacts to 'recruit' workers to the agency
- Manipulation of victims who were already in 'Debt bondage'
- Relocation of victims to housing controlled/owned by exploiters
- Forced/coerced to exceed their allowed 'working hours' – threat of visa removal
- Forced to work even when sick
- Transporting to and from work to control movements
- Lied to about allowed increase work hours during Covid
- No Contracts or payslips issued
- Cash in hand payments but never for full hours worked and sometimes through 'friends' bank accounts to prevent audit trail
- Issued False DBS numbers and profiles
- False training records
- Not paid for 'shadow' days
- Excessive rent for 'poor' accommodation



- Unlicensed HMO's
- Sleeping on mattresses
- Sharing with other people
- Little heating and food
- Bare furnishings



Op Topaz multi-agency response

Outcomes to date	April - August 2023
Arrests	11
Potential Victims Identified	122
Illegal Worker identified	146
Case referred to CPS	5
Warnings issued	5
Enforcement Notices	1
Civil Penalties Issued	16
NFA	8
Sponsor Licence Suspended	23
Sponsor Licence Revoked	8
Ongoing intelligence Items	233
Ongoing Investigations	35



Exploitation

- Excessive fees being paid either to 'Agents' in home Country – ranging from £10,000 - £20,000 or 'directly to their UK Sponsor (illegal in the UK)
- When they arrive in UK the work they have been promised does not materialise – either no job at all, or not the hours they were contracted to (much reduced hours) or they are then 'farmed off' to other agencies in and out of the care Sector
- They are forced to work excessive hours whilst not being paid for all of the hours, or below the NMW.
- Not being paid for their travel to and from work.
- Placed/forced to live in overcrowded 'poor' quality accommodation by their sponsor/exploiter and charged excessive rent OR CONVERSELY having been promised accommodation there is none when they arrive.
- Numerous cases where the 'workers' are not actually 'qualified' and have had their documentation falsified by their 'sponsor/exploiter' – thereby placing those they care for at risk
- Overall threat of 'removal' of sponsorship and deportation if they complain – manufactured 'sacking' which negates their visa.



- The workers/victims then themselves have 60 days to find an alternative 'sponsor', and most likely when they are homeless and without funds.
- Many churches and charities are having victims present themselves (e.g. Food Bank) as destitute.
- Many victims have 'sold' all of their possessions to get to UK and are in 'Debt bondage' and many have also brought their families across as 'dependants' which adds to their plight.
- Most recent case in West Midlands – their sponsor due to breaches of sponsorship rules had their right to recruit removed from them and their care agency was closed down – this has resulted in 160 workers/victims who now do not have work.



The challenge of exploitation in the Care Sector

