

This modern slavery and human trafficking statement is made in line with section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 'Transparency in supply chains' and constitutes the Trust's slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2026.

Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires organisations in all sectors with turnover in excess of £36 million to prepare a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year. The statement must set out the steps that the organisation will take during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains, and in any part of its own operations. If the organisation has not taken any such steps, it must publish a statement to that effect

About the Trust

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust (the Trust) is a large acute hospital trust in the Southeast of England. The Trust was legally established on 14 February 2000, for the purposes specified in section 5(1) of the National Health Service and Community Care Act 1990 i.e. to be responsible for the ownership, provision and management of hospitals or other establishments or facilities.

Its headquarters are at Maidstone Hospital, Hermitage Lane, Kent.

The Trust's mission, as defined in its Strategy, is to be there for our patients and their families in their time of need, and to empower our staff so that they can feel proud and fulfilled in delivering the best care for our community. Through the Trust's vision of "Exceptional people, outstanding care", the Trust provides a full range of general hospital services and some areas of specialist complex care to around 600,000 people living in West Kent and East Sussex. It is the cancer centre for Kent and Medway and provides some aspects of specialist care to a wider population of 2 million people. The Trust runs its own charity and works with several voluntary organisations for the benefit of its staff and the local population.

The Trust's core catchment areas are Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells and their surrounding boroughs. It employs over 8,000 staff (full and part-time staff). The Trust operates from four sites (Maidstone Hospital, Tunbridge Wells Hospital, the Crowborough Birth Centre and Fordcombe Hospital, Tunbridge Wells) and manages cancer services at the Kent and Canterbury Hospital and outpatient services at several community locations. The Trust procures goods and services from a range of providers and contracts vary from small one-off purchases to large service contracts.

Our Commitment

Modern slavery can take place in a wide range of employment sectors, including health and social care. The Trust does not permit, condone or otherwise accept any form of slavery and/or human trafficking (as defined by the Modern Slavery Act 2015) either by its employees, subcontractors, contractors, agents, partners or any other organisation, entity, body, business or individual that the Trust engages or does business with.

We are committed to ensuring there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in our supply chains or any part of our business activity. As a provider of healthcare, MTW has a duty to uphold the principles of the Human Rights Act (1998), specifically article 4 which holds that people have the right to live free from slavery or forced labour.

MTW has policies and procedures in place to equip staff with the skills to identify and support victims of modern slavery and to ensure modern slavery is not taking place in our business activities and supply chains. Our safeguarding training includes role relevant awareness and understanding of modern slavery and helps staff identify, respond to and support victims of modern slavery and recognise the important role of the NHS in protecting these individuals.

Contracts and Procurement

The Trust's supply chain entails the purchasing of goods and services that support the operation of our core business of healthcare. Operating with integrity governs our approach and therefore our aspiration to be recognised by our stakeholders as an organisation which is a responsible corporate citizen in all our relationships.

The Procurement Act 2023, which came into force in February 2025, includes provisions for excluding suppliers from procurements based on offenses under the Modern Slavery Act. Procurement within the Trust was delivered by an in-house function. Reviews and updates to any policies and procedures that relate to the Trust's corporate responsibility for slavery and human trafficking are included in any purchasing guidelines. There are expectations of suppliers in several areas including diversity, ethical, social, environment, health and safety issues and revisions have been made to provide further guidance on slavery and other human rights issues.

Procurement and Contract teams are qualified and experienced in managing healthcare contracts and have received appropriate briefings and in some cases formal training on the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Trust aligns with PPN 02/23: Tackling Modern Slavery in Government Supply Chains, which helps understand where suppliers are at and where they should be in terms of responsible supply chain practices. In line with this policy, we do require suppliers to complete a Modern Slavery Assessment Tool (MSAT). This helps us identify and help manage risks associated with high-risk supply chains and be transparent with our suppliers through engagement and communication.

The Trust complies with the Procurement Act 2023 and where the procurement is full open market the tender is advertised on the Find a Tender service and bidders as part of the process have to confirm their compliance with the Modern Slavery Act.

Recruitment

The Trust's recruitment and employment procedures include appropriate pre-employment screening of all staff to determine the right to work in the UK. There is an expectation that all employees conduct business with honesty and integrity and there is a zero-tolerance approach to bribery and corruption.

The Trust has not been informed of any incidents of slavery or human trafficking during the year but will investigate any allegations should they arise and in the event of a slavery or human trafficking incident occurring or an allegation being made, the matter will be reported and investigated using the Trust's established processes to determine appropriate action.

The Trust uses its own networks locally and nationally to ensure it engages with other organisations to learn and to share best practice including NHS England, NHS Providers and other collaboration initiatives such as the, Integrated Care Boards, Health and Care Partnerships and Primary Care Networks.

In conclusion, the Trust is committed to better understanding its supply chains and collaborating with stakeholders to improve transparency and address incidents of slavery or human trafficking identified.