



Webinar Introduction: Tackling Exploitation and Promoting Ethical Recruitment



Addressing challenges in
recruitment of skilled care
workers



Tackling Exploitation and Promoting Ethical recruitment

Series Overview

The series focuses on tackling exploitation and promoting ethical recruitment within the care sector across quarterly sessions.

Urgency of Issue

Exploitation in recruitment is a growing concern requiring immediate attention and collective action.

Encouraging Engagement

Participants are encouraged to actively contribute and collaborate in addressing exploitation challenges.



Goals of the Webinar Series

Raising Awareness

The webinar series educates professionals on risks and indicators of exploitation to increase awareness.

Sharing Best Practices

Webinars provide practical tools and case studies for effective intervention and improved practices.

Fostering Collaboration

The series builds regional networks to enable collective response and stronger professional connections.

Why This Matters – A Call To Action

We need to act NOW

Exploitation Risks in Care Sector

Internationally recruited care workers face exploitation risks including unsafe conditions and coercion. Workforce pressures mean the care sector is increasingly reliant on international recruitment.

With that comes **real safeguarding risks** — exploitation, debt bondage, workers left destitute when licences are revoked

Human Impact and Empathy

This issue affects the wellbeing of essential workers and calls for empathy and urgent action.

Need for Systemic Change

Protective measures and systemic reforms are necessary to safeguard care workers and improve care systems.

What if this was your family member?



Sandwell Local Authority Insights Ground-Level Observations

Examples of Exploitation

Frontline teams report misleading pay information, overcrowded housing, and visa-related threats encountered on the ground.

Displaced workers put at risk of exploitation.

Case studies : Female / Hospital admission / Domestic servitude / use of power and coercion / wages incorrect / Punishment - Disciplinary / Job terminated / physical emotional mental psychological impact.

Male similar story – Positive conclusive grounds NRM/ ABE interview ?
Mental decline / attempts to end life

Need for Vigilance

Observations highlight the ongoing risk of exploitation, demanding vigilant monitoring and awareness among authorities.

Importance of Partnerships

Strong collaboration between local authorities and care providers is essential for effective and timely interventions.

Sandwell Picture

Scale:

- 58 agencies with a sponsorship licence
- 30% of commissioned agencies visa-dependent.
- Almost 1 in 3 Sandwell providers are visa-dependent - That's nearly three times higher than the regional average.

Enforcement / Risk:

- 15 agencies reported to the Home Office → licences suspended
- 6 licence revocations → 891 workers + dependents impacted (21% of WM revocations)
- 1 in 5 licence revocations in the West Midlands occurred in Sandwell

Overall Impact:

- 1,785 individuals impacted across Sandwell (+ dependents) - That's enough to fill 35 double-decker buses with exploited workers and their dependents.

Key Risk:

Exploitation risks include: recruitment fees, debt bondage, coercive contracts, immigration threats, unsafe working/living conditions

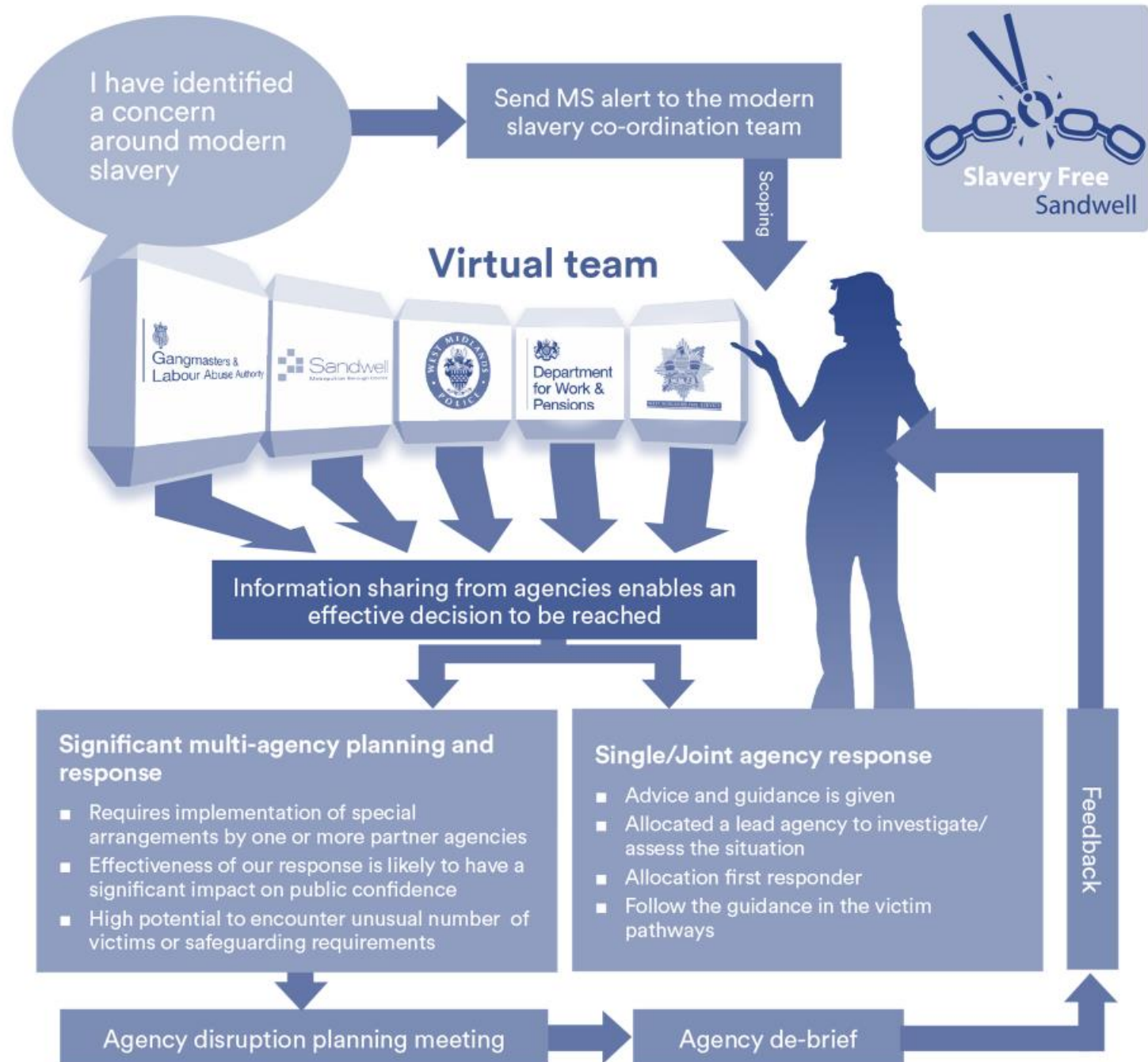
International recruitment remains essential for the care sector, but ethical recruitment and safeguarding are critical to prevent exploitation.

Slavery and Human Trafficking Partnership

- Multi-agency intelligence sharing & disruption planning.
- Coordinates safeguarding + enforcement responses.
- Nationally recognised as best practice (gold standard).

Key strengths – International Recruitment

- Brings together enforcement, safeguarding, commissioning, and welfare.
- Tackles both organised crime and worker welfare.
- Provides tactical advice, disruption planning, and coordinated safeguarding.
- Builds public confidence through visible action.

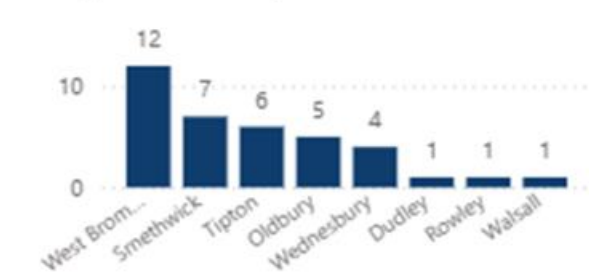


Care sector

Care sector Locations



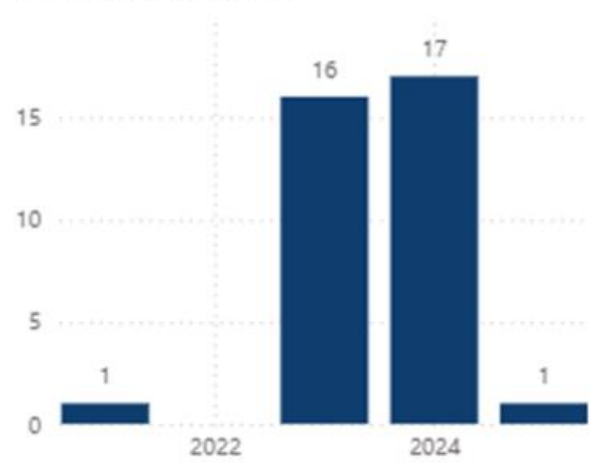
Immigration crime by town



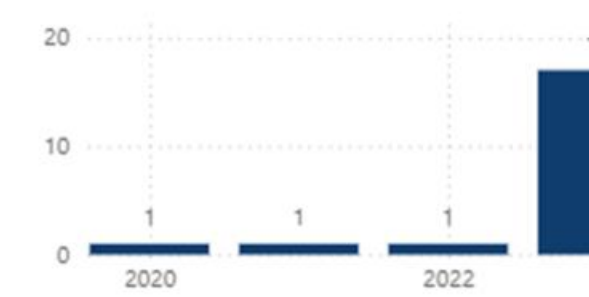
Care sector by ward



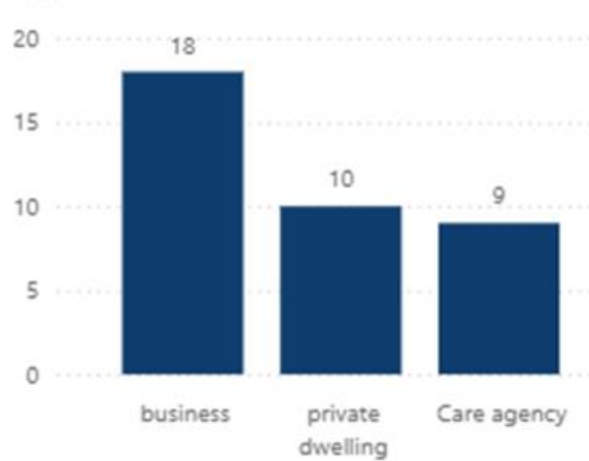
Care sector referrals



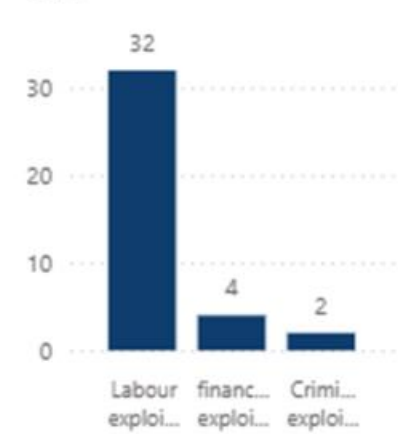
Multi agency visits for Care sector



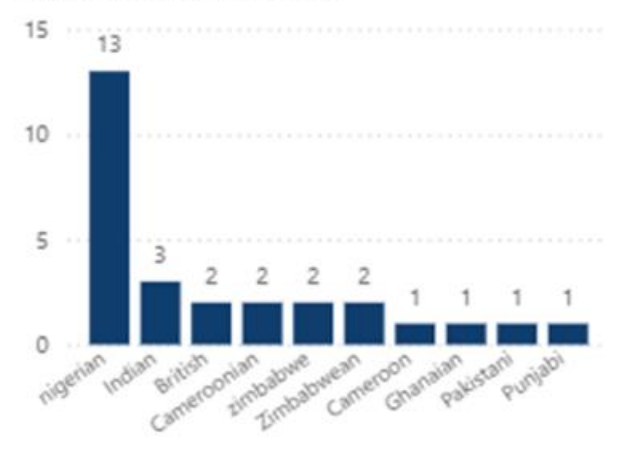
Type of location



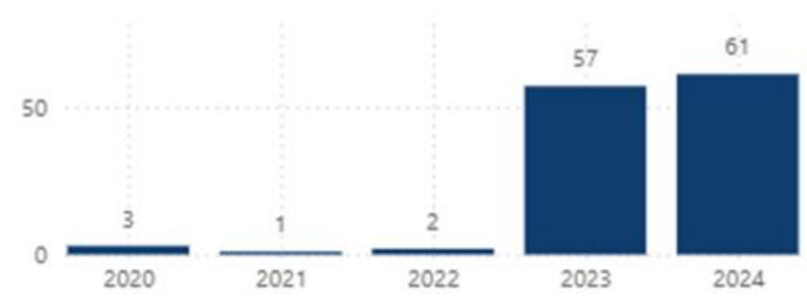
Care sector modern slavery type



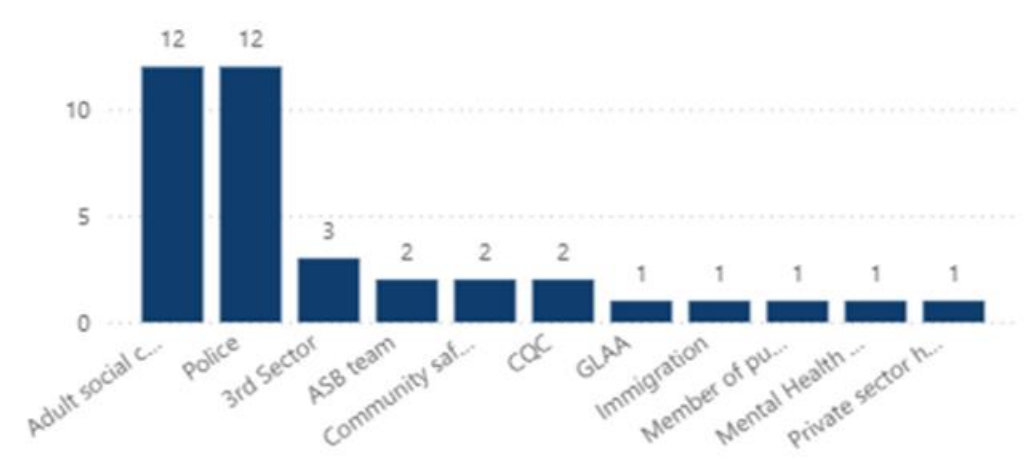
Care sector by nationality



Number of agency interventions



Referral from

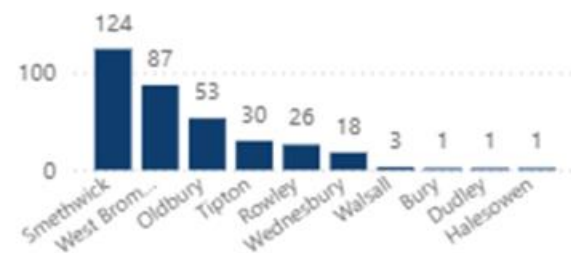


Immigration crime

Immigration crime/modern slavery



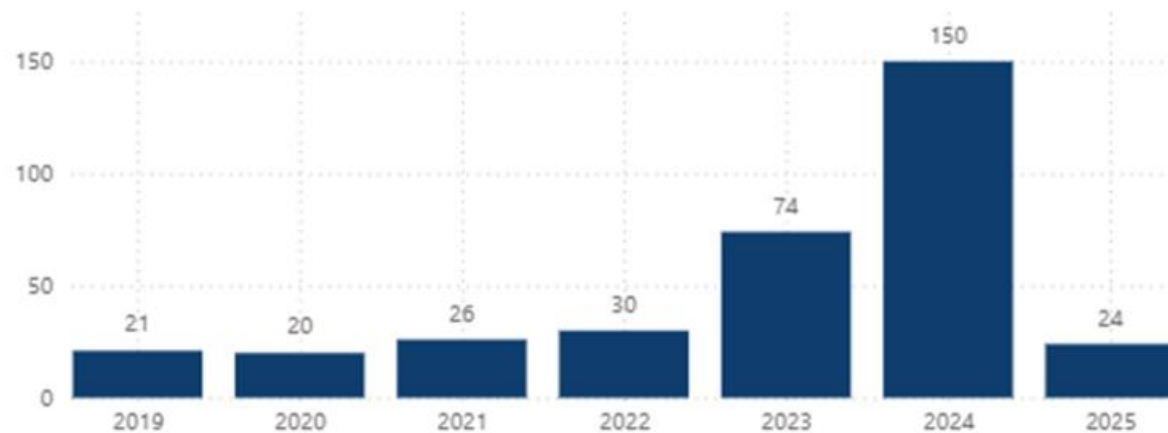
Immigration crime by town



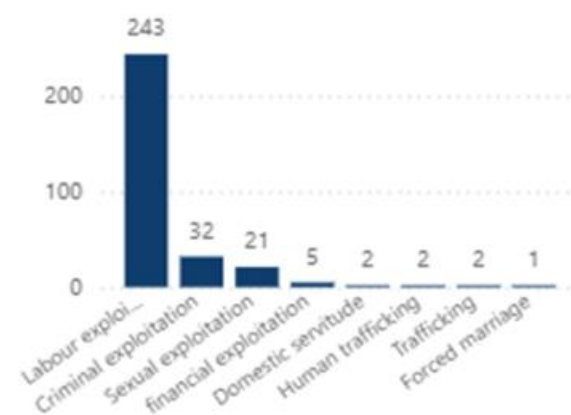
Organised immigration crime by ward



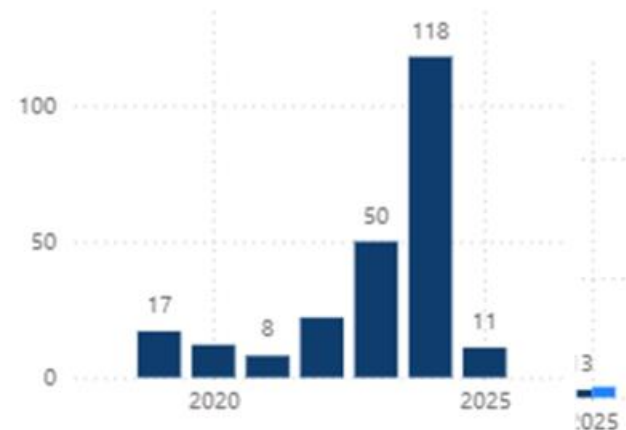
Immigration crime referred



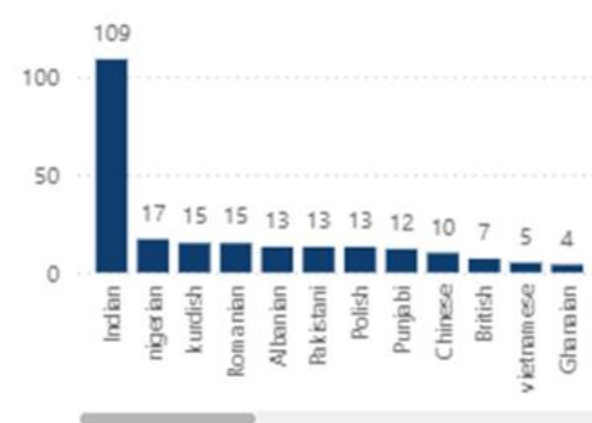
Immigration crime modern slavery type



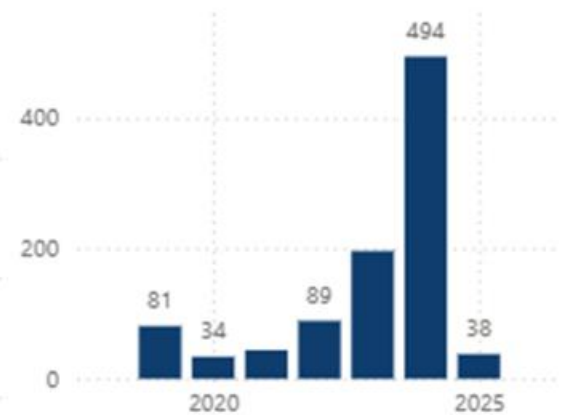
Multi agency visits



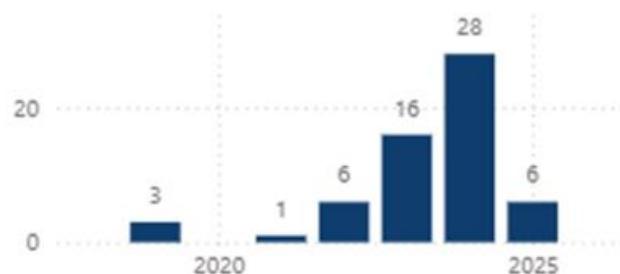
Immigration crime by nationality



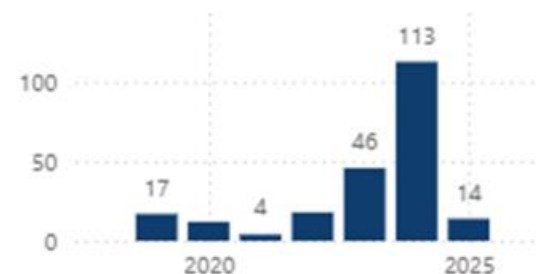
Number of agency interventions



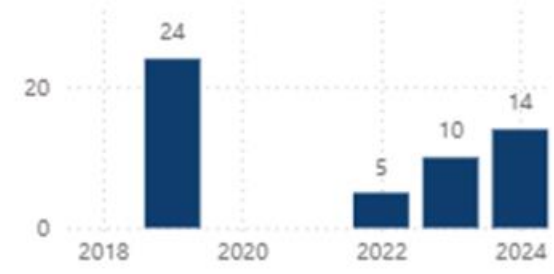
House of multiple occupation (HMO)



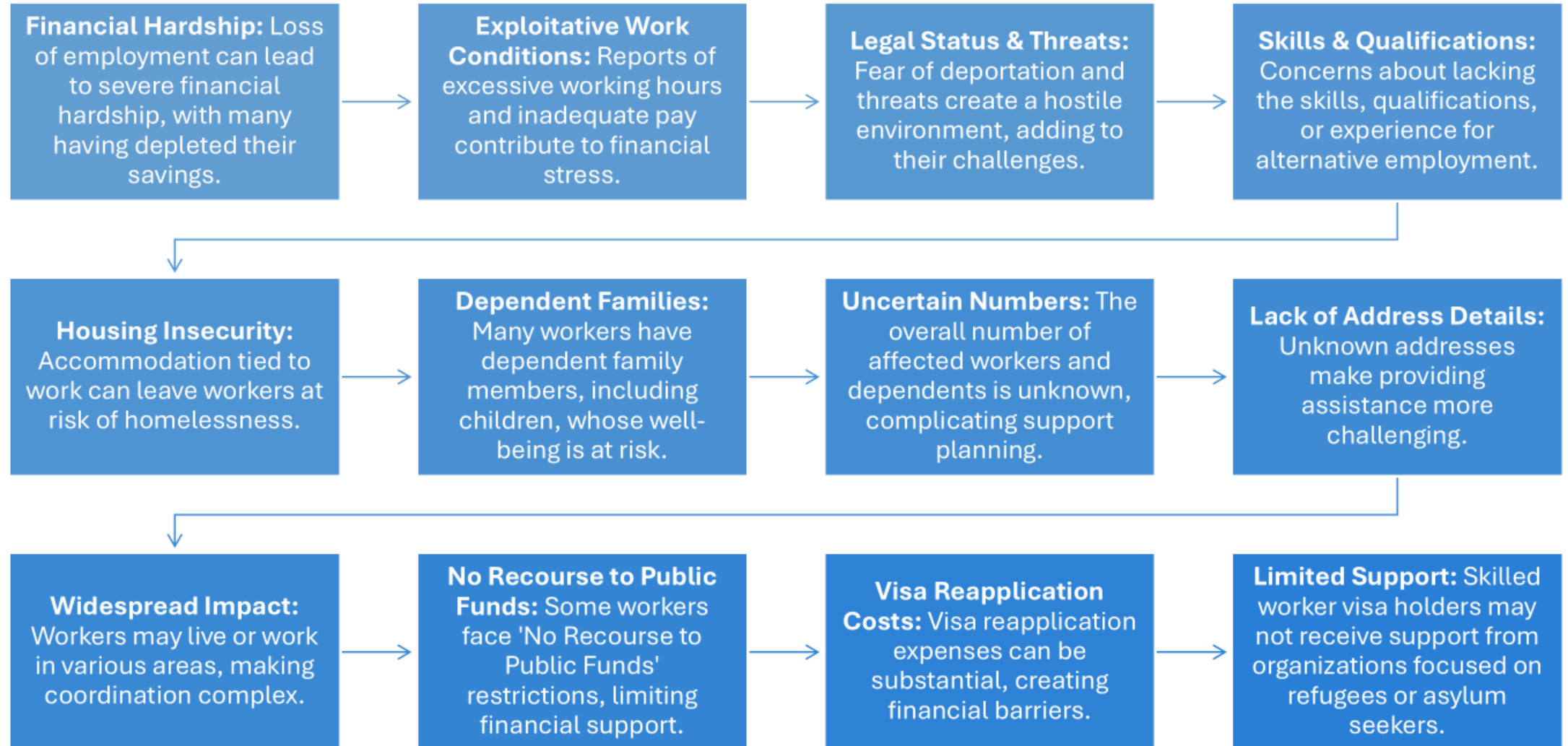
Location disrupted



Number arrested



Displaced workers



This is not just a contract breach — it is **modern slavery in practice**, leaving families trapped in debt, fear, and destitution.

Worker Profile

- Arrived in May 2023 on Skilled Care Worker visa
- Travelled from Nigeria with wife + 5 children (aged 4–17).
- Contract promised 39 hours/week at £20,490 salary.

What happened

- Sent for 4 days of unpaid “training”
- No work given since arrival.
- Already paid £8,000 recruitment fee.
- No entitlement to benefits → destitution.

Impact

- Rent arrears 6 months; utilities unpaid.
- Surviving on food parcels from Dudley Rotary Club.
- Family welfare neglected by employer and system.

Behind every statistic (1,785 individuals impacted in Sandwell), there are **families left destitute, vulnerable to coercion, and stripped of dignity.**

“Promises Broken”

Care worker paid **£10,000** to an agency for sponsorship.

On arrival: **no job, no income**, placed in overcrowded housing with other families and then evicted

Threatened with **deportation** if complaints were made.

Referred into the **National Referral Mechanism (NRM)** – reasonable grounds decision for Human Trafficking

Key Agencies and Actions: Addressing Concerns in Domiciliary Agencies

GLAA (Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority)

- Investigate labour exploitation and violations.
- Collaborate with SHOP.
- Enforce labour laws.

Police

- Investigate modern slavery reports.
- Collect evidence.
- Issue cease and desist orders where appropriate.
- Collaborate with SHOP.

HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs)

- Review financial records.
- Investigate pay practices.
- Cooperate with law enforcement.

Immigration Authorities

- Investigate immigration violations.
- Assess immigration status.
- Provide support.

Local Authority

- Coordinate responses.
- Provide support services.
- Issue cease and desist orders where appropriate.

Adult/Childrens social care

- Review contracts for compliance.
- Terminate contracts if necessary.
- Support potential victims.
- Conduct Human Rights assessments.

UK Sponsorship Team

- Address sponsorship violations.
- Take legal actions, including license revocations.

EAS (Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate)

- Investigate illegal fees.
- Take enforcement actions.

CQC (Care Quality Commission)

- Assess care quality.
- Take regulatory actions.

Jobs Aware

- Support affected workers.
- Investigate job scams.
- Take necessary actions.