



Homecare Association response to Earned Settlement Consultation

Background

- 1. Are you responding to this survey as an individual or as a representative of an organisation?**
 - a. Individual
 - b. Organisation**

- 2. [If organisation] Are you responding on behalf of an organisation based in the UK?**
 - a. Yes**
 - b. No

- 3. [If organisation] Which of the following best describes your type of organisation?**
 - a. Private sector
 - b. Third sector / Voluntary
 - c. Public sector
 - d. Education provider
 - e. Business representative organisation or trade union**
 - f. Think tank or research/policy organisation
 - g. Other
 - h. Don't know / prefer not to say

- 4. [If organisation] Does your organisation provide immigration advice or support services?**
 - a. Yes
 - b. No**
 - c. Don't know / prefer not to say

5. **[If organisation based in the UK] Has your organisation ever sponsored employees to work in the UK on a visa?**
- a. Yes – we currently sponsor employees
 - b. Yes – we have sponsored employees in the past
 - c. No – we have never sponsored employees
 - d. Don't know / prefer not to say
6. **[If organisation based in the UK] Does your organisation intend to sponsor employees to work in the UK on a visa in the future?**
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Don't know / prefer not to say
7. **[If organisation based in the UK] How many people work for your organisation across the UK as a whole?**
- a. Under 10
 - b. 10-49
 - c. 50-249
 - d. 250+
 - e. Don't know / prefer not to say
8. **[If organisation currently sponsors employees to work in the UK on a visa] How many employees are currently sponsored via a UK visa at your organisation?**
- a. Under 10
 - b. 10-49
 - c. 50-249
 - d. 250+
 - e. Don't know / prefer not to say
9. **[If organisation] Which of the following best describes the industry sector your organisation operates in?**
- a. Agriculture, forestry and fishing
 - b. Mining and quarrying
 - c. Manufacturing
 - d. Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply
 - e. Water supply, sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
 - f. Construction
 - g. Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles
 - h. Transportation and storage
 - i. Accommodation and food service activities
 - j. Information and Communication
 - k. Financial and insurance activities

- l. Real estate activities
- m. Professional, scientific and technical activities
- n. Administrative and support service activities
- o. Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
- p. Education
- q. Human health and social work activities
- r. Arts, entertainment and recreation
- s. Other
- t. Don't know / prefer not to say

10. [If organisation based in the UK] In which part of the UK is your organisation mainly based?

- a. East of England
- b. East Midlands
- c. London or Greater London
- d. North East
- e. North West
- f. South East (excluding London)
- g. South West
- h. West Midlands
- i. Yorkshire and the Humber
- j. Scotland
- k. Wales
- l. Northern Ireland
- m. Other
- n. Don't know / prefer not to say

[Q11-17 for individuals]

Earned Settlement

In this section, we invite your views on the proposed Earned Settlement framework, including how clearly the changes are explained. Before continuing, please take a moment to review the proposed reforms as outlined in this Paper.

'Earned settlement' is a principle that recognises the value of long-term contribution to the UK. Rather than granting settlement automatically after a fixed period, this approach requires individuals to demonstrate sustained commitment (through work, community involvement, or other meaningful contributions) before being granted permanent status. The proposed framework sets a starting point of 10 years before settlement can be obtained. This duration may be reduced based on positive indicators (e.g. contributing to the Exchequer by earning a certain salary) or extended based on negative indicators (e.g. reliance on public funds).

1. Overall, how clear do you find the proposed changes to the settlement framework?

- a. Very clear
- b. Somewhat clear
- c. Neither clear nor unclear
- d. Somewhat unclear**
- e. Very unclear
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

2. [If unclear] Which aspects of the proposed changes to settlement are not clear?

- a. The concept of earned settlement
- b. The overall purpose
- c. Which groups may be eligible for exemptions from the 10-year qualifying period
- d. How reductions to the qualifying period will be applied
- e. How extensions to the qualifying period will be applied
- f. How reductions and/or extensions will be applied if applicants meet multiple criteria
- g. How the proposed changes will apply to dependants and children**
- h. Other (please specify) what transitional arrangements might be possible**

3. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposed changes to the settlement framework?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree**
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

Character

This question focuses on 'Character', the first of the four core pillars designed to ensure that applicants make a meaningful contribution to UK society and meet clear, measurable standards.

To be eligible for settlement, applicants will need to meet the suitability requirements set out in the existing Immigration Rules (Part Suitability).

This reformed system will, as now, provide for the refusal of applications where core requirements relating to their character and conduct (for example, having a criminal conviction, non-compliance with immigration requirements and considerations pertaining to the public good). It will be mandatory to meet such requirements and

there will be no ability to trade with other considerations to determine the qualifying period.

1. Do you have any comments on how ‘Character’ should be considered in relation to settlement? [200 word limit]

Character should focus on deliberate, serious wrongdoing, not technical breaches caused by labour-market realities or system failures.

A [recent survey of British workers](#) found it takes 3.8 months (114 days) on average to secure a job, much longer than the 60 days the Home Office allows a sponsored worker to find a new role after losing their job or their sponsor losing their licence. In social care, finding a new employer with a spare Certificate of Sponsorship (CoS) is particularly difficult. Some careworkers overstay because their employer cannot secure or assign a CoS in time, or because criminals hack their employer’s Sponsorship Management System and steal CoS, which are not promptly replaced by UKVI. It would be wrong to treat these individuals as having poor character when they have tried to comply.

We recommend that character assessments distinguish clearly between:

1. Intentional, repeated non-compliance and criminality, which should carry full weight;
2. Short overstays directly caused by sponsor or Home Office failings, which should not attract penalties; and
3. People affected by serious labour exploitation or modern slavery, who may need longer to regularise their status.

Penalties for overstaying should apply only to deliberate overstays of more than six months.

Integration

This section focuses on ‘Integration’. To be eligible for settlement applicants will need to demonstrate meaningful engagement with British society. This includes passing a Life in the UK test and speaking English at an upper intermediate level (B2 standard under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages).

Under the proposed reforms, applicants who can demonstrate advanced English language ability (at C1 standard) will be able to reduce their route to settlement by one year. C1 level under the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages means the user is proficient and able to perform complex tasks related to social, academic, and professional situations.

1. **What do you think about a 1-year reduction for applications who can demonstrate advanced English language ability (at C1 standard)?**
 - a. The reduction doesn't go far enough (it should be longer than 1 year)
 - b. The reduction is about right
 - c. The reduction goes too far (it should be shorter than 1 year)
 - d. There should be no reduction for these applicants
 - e. Don't know / prefer not to say

2. **How do you think integration should be assessed? (please select all that apply)**
 - a. Through a formal test (such a revised Life in the UK Test)
 - b. Through gathered ongoing evidence (such as participation in certified English Language education or employment/volunteering evidence)
 - c. Through completing a cultural orientation course once arrived in the UK
 - d. Through character references from public services professional and British Nationals
 - e. Through evidence of learning and participation within the wider community (including testimonies from relevant organisations/groups)
 - f. In another way (please specify) – Through working as a careworker as this involves cultural competency.
 - g. Don't know / prefer not to say

3. **Do you have any further comments on how 'Integration' should be considered in relation to settlement? [200 word limit]**

The Home Office should formally recognise regulated, front-line work in care, nursing, medicine, and teaching as evidence of integration, equivalent or superior to volunteering or formal tests. Individuals working in these professions integrate extensively through their work, meeting diverse people across the community, their families, health and housing professionals, and community organisations. For example, a careworker might support someone to make culturally appropriate food, attend a football match or go to a religious service, speak to a GP, or link up with local age or disability charities.

The Care Quality Commission, the main regulator for care providers in England, requires providers to demonstrate that they provide culturally appropriate care. For most people supported by homecare, this will require a cultural awareness of British culture and subcultures.

Requiring people in these roles to volunteer outside of work (when they often work long hours) to demonstrate integration seems unreasonable.

On a separate point, some careworkers who are already in the UK have children with learning disabilities or neurodivergence who find it harder (or impossible) to meet the English Language Test requirements. We recommend that the Home Office make an exception for these people because of the risk of discrimination.

Contribution

This section focuses on ‘Contribution’. This reinforces the principle that settlement should be earned through active participation in the economy and wider society. To be eligible for settlement applicants must:

- Have contributed to the Exchequer by having annual earnings above £12,570 for a minimum of 3 to 5 years (subject to this consultation), in line with the current thresholds for paying income tax and National Insurance Contributions (NICs), or an alternative amount of income. Please note, however, that these income-related thresholds would not track future changes to the tax system.
- Have no outstanding litigation, NHS, tax or other government debt.

1. Do you think the following groups should be exempt from the requirement to have earned above £12,750 for at least 3 to 5 years?

	Yes	No	Don't know / prefer not to say
Those on maternity leave or long-term illness/disability	X		
Those in certain occupations with different pay arrangements (e.g. Ministers of Religion)			X

2. Are there any other groups that you think should be exempt from the requirement to have earned above £12,750 for at least 3 to 5 years? You may list up to five separate groups. If you think there are more than five groups that should be exempt from this requirement then please list the five that you most strongly feel should be provided with an exemption.

Group 1: Workers subject to significant labour exploitation or modern slavery

Group 2: Workers that had their earnings disrupted by Home Office enforcement activity against their employers

3. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that migrants who have worked in an occupation below RQF level 6 should have their standard qualifying period for settlement set at 15 years?** *Occupations skilled to RQF level 6 are those which require a qualification equivalent to degree level or higher.*
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree**
 - f. Don't know / prefer not to say
4. **To what extent do you agree or disagree that applicants who earn a taxable income above £50,270 should be eligible for a reduction in their time to settlement?**
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neither agree nor disagree
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
 - f. Don't know / prefer not to say**

Under the proposed reforms, applicants who earn a taxable income above a certain threshold for 3 years prior to applying for settlement may qualify for settlement sooner.

5. What do you think about the proposed reductions for applicants based on their annual taxable income?

	The reduction doesn't go far enough (it should be longer)	The reduction is about right	The reduction goes too far (it should be shorter)	There should be no reduction for these applicants	Don't know / prefer not to say
7-year reduction for applicants who earn a taxable income above £125,140					X
5-year reduction for applicants who earn a taxable income above £50,270					X

6. Do you think those employed in a public service occupation (i.e. health and education occupations where going rates are based on national pay scales) should be eligible for a reduction in their qualifying period to settlement?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know / prefer not to say

Under the proposed reforms, applicants who claim public funds (e.g. benefits and housing assistance) would face a penalty depending on the length of time they claimed public funds during their route to settlement.

The Home Office recognises that some applicants (such as those from vulnerable groups) may have extenuating circumstances to claim public funds. Later questions will explore whether specific groups should be exempt from the proposed reforms.

7. What do you think about the proposed penalties for applicants claiming public funds?

Ensuring that the UK can remain compliant with its international obligations, these penalties would exclude migrants covered by Trade Continuity Agreements and Social Security Coordination Agreements.

	The penalty doesn't go far enough (it should be longer)	The penalty is about right	The penalty goes too far (it should be shorter)	There should be no penalty for these applicants	Don't know / prefer not to say
5-year penalty for applicants who claim public funds for less than 12 months during their route to settlement					X
10-year penalty for applicants who claim public funds for more than 12 months during their route to settlement					X

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that once someone has been granted settlement in the UK they should be eligible to claim public funds (e.g. benefits and housing assistance)?

Ensuring that the UK can remain compliant with its international obligations, any change would need to take account of migrants covered by Trade Continuity Agreements, Social Security Coordination Agreements and other international obligations.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree**
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

The Home Office recognises the vital role that volunteers play in delivering positive change to their communities, the environment and the lives of others. Volunteers, including those who are migrants, are a valued part of British life and their contributions enrich communities across the country.

The Home Office is considering whether giving back to the local community, for example, through volunteering, should be recognised as a form of contribution towards earned settlement.

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that giving back to the local community (e.g. by volunteering) should be considered as a contribution that can reduce the length of time required to qualify for settlement?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say**

10. [If organisation] Does your organisation currently accept or manage volunteers?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Don't know / prefer not to say**

11. [If organisation with volunteers] How easy or difficult do you think it would be for applicants to provide evidence of giving back to the community?

- a. Very easy
- b. Somewhat easy
- c. Neither easy nor difficult
- d. Somewhat difficult
- e. Very difficult
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

[Don't answer as not applicable]

12. [If organisation with volunteers] Considering any potential benefits or challenges, what would be the overall impact of recognising giving back to the community as a contribution towards settlement for your organisation? Would this have...

- a. A very positive impact
- b. A somewhat positive impact
- c. No impact
- d. A somewhat negative impact
- e. A very negative impact

[Don't answer as not applicable]

13. Do you have any further comments on how 'Contributions' should be considered in relation to settlement, including any potential benefits or challenges of recognising giving back to the community as a contribution towards settlement? [200 words]

We strongly oppose the proposed fifteen-year wait for settlement for careworkers and recommend retaining the five-year route, with robust transitional protection for those already in the UK. Care work is a public service: councils and the NHS purchase around 80% of homecare. Judging the sector's economic contribution by salaries alone is misleading, as government funding and commissioning constrains pay rather than reflecting skill or social value.

DHSC has introduced a care career pathway to support progression and professional development. Requiring sponsored care workers to remain in the same role and salary band for up to fifteen years undermines this policy, restricting promotion unless higher roles are separately visa-eligible. At a time of severe recruitment challenges, any reduction in the workforce risks critical, life-threatening gaps in care.

The consequences extend beyond social care. [Carers UK](#) reports that 600 people leave work each day to provide unpaid care, with nearly half experiencing negative health impacts. Reduced care capacity will also worsen delayed hospital discharges: [42% of patients are waiting](#) for services largely delivered through social care, with each occupied bed costing around [£400 per night](#). Homecare is significantly more cost-effective; limiting care worker availability will increase delays and further strain NHS efficiency

Residence

This section focuses on ‘Residence’. This pillar aims to recognise lawful, continuous residence in the UK. In order to meet the qualifying period for settlement, applicants will need to have spent the required time in the UK on a route, or routes, that leads to settlement as set out in the existing Immigration Rules.

Under the proposed reforms, a person’s pathway to settlement will also depend on their history of compliance with immigration laws. Applicants who arrived in the UK illegally (e.g. via a small boat), arrived in the UK on a visit visa, or who have overstayed their visa for 6 months or more, will have additional time added to their standard qualifying period for settlement, or prevented from settling in the UK altogether.

1. Which of the following penalties do you think should be applied to each of the following applicants?

	A penalty of 20 years	A penalty of 10 years	A penalty of 5 years	There should be no penalty for these applicants	Don't know / prefer not to say
Applicants who arrived in the UK illegally					X
Applicants who initially entered the UK on a temporary visit visa (typically this visa permits stays of up to 6 months for tourism, visiting family or friends or shortterm business activities)					X
Applicants who have overstayed their original visa by 6 months or more					X

2. Do you have any further comments on how ‘Residence’ should be considered in relation to settlement? [200 words]

As set out in the Character section, we urge the government to consider the situation of careworkers and other workers who overstay their visas because of sponsorship licence revocations or the inability of their employer to secure a Certificate of Sponsorship in time, despite having applied.

We recommend that the Home Office builds in evidential routes (e.g. National Referral Mechanism records, sponsor enforcement records) to identify clearly where the sponsor caused overstay or where Home Office processes did, rather than relying on discretionary decision-making. No penalty should apply where the sponsor or Home Office processes directly caused the overstay.

Ensuring that the Home Office does not apply penalties to applicants who overstay their visas by less than six months may help protect individuals in these scenarios. Those who have experienced trauma because of serious labour exploitation and modern slavery may need longer grace periods and specific exemptions, given the time required to regularise their status safely after trauma.

Eligibility and Equalities

This section focuses on whether specific groups (including potentially vulnerable groups) should be exempt from, or receive reductions to, the proposed earned settlement reforms.

1. Where the standard qualifying period is proposed to increase from 5 to 10 years, which option for you think should apply to each of the following visa holder groups?

The government remains steadfast in its support for members of the Hong Kong community in the UK and is fully committed to the BN(O) route, which will continue to welcome Hong Kongers. We fully recognise the significant contribution that Hong Kongers have already made to the UK, and the role they will continue to play in the years ahead. That is why those on the BN(O) visa route will continue to be able to settle in the UK after living here for five years.

We want to continue to attract the brightest and best exceptional talent that attracts investment, creates jobs, accelerates productivity and promotes growth through our targeted immigration routes: Global Talent for the most

talented leaders and potential leaders and Innovator Founder for the most talented entrepreneurs.

	Reduction (of 5 or 7 years from the standard qualifying period of 10 years)	Apply full change (standard qualifying period of 10 years)	Don't know / prefer not to say
Applicants who currently require 3 years continuous residence under the Global Talent route			X
Applicants who currently require 5 continuous years residence under the Global Talent route			X
Applicants who currently require 3 continuous years residence under the Innovator Founder route			X
Applicants on humanitarian visa routes (e.g. Syrian, Afghan)			X

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree that dependants of migrants who hold Global Talent or Innovator Founder visa status should retain their current 5-year path to settlement?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that there should not be transitional arrangements for those already on a pathway to settlement?

Transitional arrangements refer to temporary measures which are designed to ease the impact of the new rules for those already in the UK and on an existing pathway to settlement.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

The current immigration system includes provisions that protect the most vulnerable in society by allowing them to settle in the UK.

For example, a person on the family route whose relationship ends because they are a victim of domestic abuse can settle immediately. Similarly, a person on the family route whose partner dies can also settle immediately.

There are special arrangements for children and young adults who have grown up in the UK without an immigration status, allowing them to settle 5 years after regularising their status. Please note references to children and young adults in this section does not mean children in care or care leavers, for which separate targeted will take in place in due course.

Finally, adults with long-term care needs can join a close relative in the UK and settle where the care they require is not available or affordable in their home country.

4. Do you think the following vulnerable groups should retain their current arrangements and be exempt from the proposed settlement changes?

	Yes	No	Don't know / prefer not to say
Victims of domestic violence and abuse	X		
Bereaved partners	X		
Children and young adults who grew up in the UK without immigration status	X		
Adults with long-term care needs	X		

5. Are there any other vulnerable groups that you think should be considered as part of this consultation? *You may list up to five separate groups. If you think there are more than five groups that should be considered as part of this consultation, please list the five that you feel will be most affected by these changes.*

Group 1: Workers who experience modern slavery or serious labour exploitation (the current National Referral Mechanism standard is very high).

Group 2: Workers where the Home Office has disrupted their earnings during enforcement activity against their employers.

Group 3: Dependants with learning disabilities or cognitive impairments (in relation to English Language tests)

The Armed Forces Covenant is a national commitment to ensure that those who serve or have served in HM Armed Forces are not disadvantaged because of their service. Individuals who have completed the minimum term of service (4 years), or who were medically discharged from service, can apply for settlement immediately

upon leaving the Armed Forces. This provision also extends to their immediate family members, including partners and children. The government is committed to at least maintaining the current time periods to settlement for HM Armed Forces and their immediate family members.

6. Do you think the following Armed Forces groups should retain their current time period to settlement or should further reductions be available to this group?

	Retain current arrangements	Further reductions should be applied	Don't know / prefer not to say
Members of HM Armed Forces			X
Immediate family members of HM Armed Forces			X

Currently, most dependant partners of migrants can settle at the same time as the main applicant without meeting any additional conditions. Dependant partners of economic migrants who benefit from accelerated settlement do not themselves benefit from a reduced settlement period. Under the proposed reforms, dependant partners will have their own qualifying period based on their individual circumstances.

For children, it is recognised that they cannot meet certain requirements under the earned settlement proposals, such as National Insurance Contributions (NICs). The Home Office intends to keep a window for those admitted as dependants under 18 to settle at the same time as their parents, while considering an age cut-off after which they would need to follow their own route to qualify for settlement.

7. To what extent do you agree or disagree that dependant partners of migrants should earn settlement in their own right?

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

8. To what extent do you agree or disagree that dependant children of migrants should earn settlement in their own right? (with employment-related requirements waived if they were admitted as a dependant under 18)

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree

- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

9. To what extent do you agree or disagree that resettled refugees should have a 10-year route to settlement? Resettled refugees are those who have been granted protection and moved to the UK through official resettlement programmes.

- a. Strongly agree
- b. Agree
- c. Neither agree nor disagree
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly Disagree
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

10. [If organisation providing immigration advice or support services] As an organisation which provides immigration advice or support services, are there any migrant groups in particular that you think will face barriers in demonstrating their eligibility or meeting new requirements for settlement?

[This question is not applicable to our organisation – leave blank]

11. [If organisation providing immigration advice or support services] What are the main barriers that you think this group / these groups will face? (please select all that apply)

- a. Lack of documentation
- b. Complexity of requirements
- c. Language barriers
- d. Financial barriers
- e. Health-related barriers
- f. Limited access to advice/support
- g. Other (please specify)

[This question is not applicable to our organisation – leave blank]

12. Do you have any further comments on how specific groups should be considered in relation to settlement? We particularly welcome views on how the proposed changes could affect children in the UK. [200 words]

Careworkers who applied to work in the UK from 2022 did so with the expectation of eligibility for settlement after five years. Extending the qualifying period to fifteen years for those already here unfairly shifts

the goalposts. Asking individuals to make a substantial contribution while prolonging their insecurity risks damaging trust in the immigration system.

It is difficult to justify requiring careworkers in roles below RQF 6 to wait fifteen years when comparable NHS staff - working within the same integrated system - are not subject to the same requirement.

Social care employs a higher proportion of women and people from ethnic minority backgrounds than many other sectors and pay remains relatively low. Imposing the longest settlement route on this workforce risks entrenching indirect structural discrimination against women and minority ethnic workers, and government must carefully examine this in the equality impact assessment.

If dependants cannot settle before the main applicant, a child arriving at age five could complete their entire education in the UK yet remain ineligible at eighteen because their parent faces a fifteen-year route. At a minimum, children who have grown up in the UK should be able to apply for settlement independently after a shorter period.

Impact on organisations

This section focuses on how the proposed earned settlement reforms may impact your organisation.

1. [If organisation] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will impact your organisation in the following ways?

	Very positive impact	Somewhat positive impact	No impact	Somewhat negative impact	Very negative impact	Not applicable	Don't know / prefer not to say
Ability to attract suitable candidates						X	
Ability to retain existing migrant workers						X	
Workforce planning						X	

Administrative burden						X	
-----------------------	--	--	--	--	--	---	--

2. [If organisation with intention to sponsor in future] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will affect your organisation's plans to sponsor employees to work in the UK on a visa in the future?

- a. Much more likely to sponsor
- b. Slightly more likely to sponsor
- c. No change
- d. Slightly less likely to sponsor
- e. Much less likely to sponsor
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

3. [If education provider organisation with intention to sponsor in future] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will affect your organisation's plans to sponsor students to study in the UK on a visa in the future?

- a. Much more likely to sponsor
- b. Slightly more likely to sponsor
- c. No change
- d. Slightly less likely to sponsor
- e. Much less likely to sponsor
- f. Don't know / prefer not to say

[Not applicable to our organisation]

4. [If organisation with intention to sponsor in future] To what extent, if at all, do you think the proposed reforms will affect your organisation's plans to sponsor refugees and displaced people to work in the UK on a visa in the future? (e.g. such as visa a community sponsorship scheme)

- a. Much more likely to sponsor
- b. Slightly more likely to sponsor
- c. No change
- d. Slightly less likely to sponsor
- e. Much less likely to sponsor
- f. Not applicable
- g. Don't know / prefer not to say

5. [If organisation] Please provide any evidence you may have on whether the proposed changes might influence visa applicants' or visa holders' decisions to come to or remain in the UK. [200 words]

We will send you the full survey data via email. In brief:

- Our [2025 workforce survey](#) showed 21% of respondents (care employers) said staff were considering leaving the country because of changes to settlement.
- Comments from respondents showed that many staff feel anxious, scared, or powerless to act.
- In January 2026, we received 108 responses to a survey from homecare providers, employing a workforce of over 15,000 careworkers:
 - 28% said staff had already left because of this policy.
 - 50% reported that staff will leave (in the future) if the government extends settlement.
 - 41% expected staff who planned to leave to leave the country; 21% to move to NHS jobs; 13% to move to public sector care jobs.
 - 48% of providers expected to need to hand back packages of care as a consequence.

We have heard concerns from our members about the implications of asking a careworker to stay in the same role for 15 years. Employees often progress to different social care roles after a few years (supervisors, care-coordinators, managers), but sponsored staff will not be able to, unless those roles are eligible for visas.

6. [If organisation] Do you have any further comments on the potential impacts on your organisation in relation to the proposed changes to settlement? [200 words]

We will write to you with further details. Our primary concerns are:

- fair treatment for careworkers who are here (discussed above); and
- that the government recognises the value of social care.

If the Home Office extends settlement, social care will lose staff. If the Home Office keeps settlement the same, careworkers will settle and some will move to other jobs. In either scenario, the care sector urgently needs to recruit more staff.

If the government publicly and incorrectly states that care is low-skilled work and that it considers it acceptable to treat careworkers detrimentally due to low salaries, this is likely to deter local job applicants and further damage the reputation of the sector.

If the government says that it intends to end the exploitation of sponsored careworkers, extending settlement will not help. This will prolong the period in which careworkers' permission to stay in the

country depends on their employer and will create the conditions for ongoing exploitation.

We don't expect the first Fair Pay Agreement until 2028. Funding equivalent to 20p per hour across all workers will not solve recruitment issues. The sector urgently needs a credible workforce plan.