

## **Modern Slavery Statement**

### **Purpose and Scope**

This statement has been published in accordance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the Act). The Act has introduced changes in UK law focused on increasing transparency in supply chains, to ensure our supply chains are free from modern slavery (that is, slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour and human trafficking). The purpose of this statement is to set out the steps taken by QE Facilities Limited (QEF) to prevent any such acts from being perpetrated within our operational supply chain.

### **Our Organisation**

QE Facilities is a well-established wholly owned subsidiary company of Gateshead Health NHS Foundation Trust, based in the North of England; with offices located in Gateshead. QEF have established separate Articles of Association along with our own board.

QEF is unique, both in its culture and its approach to the provision of Estates, procurement, consultancy and facilities management. QEF is one of a few estates and subsidiary companies to provide a diverse range of self-delivered Estates, Procurement, Consultancy and Facilities Services to businesses outside of their group holding company.

We have a strong customer service culture and a high level of client retention. We adopt a partnership approach with our clients, underpinned by the latest technology, innovative pricing and excellent service delivery. At the date of submission of this statement, QEF have established a workforce of over 500 employees.

### **Our Commitment**

QEF condemns slavery of all forms, and are fully committed to working on behalf of our customers with suppliers within our supply chain to support the human rights and welfare of the employees working alongside QEF. We expect organisations with whom we do business to adopt and enforce policies that comply with this legislation; and would immediately seek to terminate our relationship with a supplier where evidence of a failure to comply with our policies was discovered.

QEF is committed to ensuring that those involved within the supply chain of our business operations are working of their own free volition; in the delivery of high quality estates and facilities services to all customers through a skilled and experienced workforce. QEF endeavour to make a conscious effort to monitor operations to ensure no individual is taken advantage of. We intend to train staff to recognise and report any instances where the freedom of an individual is questioned.

### **Our Policies**

As part of our commitment to combating modern slavery, we maintain a number of policies, including but not limited to:

- Employee handbook
- Safeguarding policy

- Employment and recruitment policies which comply with all UK law

Our policies and procedures demonstrate our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business relationships and to implementing and enforcing effective systems and controls to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place anywhere in our supply chains.

QEF complies with external policies and processes for safe recruitment and where necessary, relevant employment checks will be conducted. The approach for internal recruitment follows robust processes in line with UK Employment Laws including 'right to work' document checks and contracts of employment. Furthermore, our pay structure mirrors that from national collective agreements, and is based on equal pay principles with rates of pay that are higher than those nationally determined.

### **Our Due Diligence**

As part of our efforts to monitor and reduce the risk of slavery and human trafficking occurring within our supply chain, we have taken the following steps:

- Gathered information from the business concerning existing suppliers;
- identified tier 1 suppliers to our business;
- Sought confirmation from those suppliers of their own compliance with the Modern Slavery Act (where appropriate) and their commitment to ethical business practices and transparency in their own supply chains.

These steps have been taken to enable us to:

- Establish and assess areas of potential risk in our business and supply chains;
- Monitor potential risk areas in our business and supply chains;
- Train our employees on what to look for [The signs of modern slavery]
- Reduce the risk of slavery and human trafficking occurring in our business and supply chains;
- Provide adequate protection for whistleblowers.

As a result, we undertake a process of due diligence to provide assurance to all relevant interested parties (i.e. our staff and our customers) that we work alongside reputable organisations.

### **Our Risk and Compliance**

QEF has taken steps to evaluate the nature and extent of its exposure to the risk of modern slavery occurring within our supply chain, measured against legislative and regulatory requirements. We do not consider that we operate in high risk environment or locations, due to our self-delivery model.

