

IMMIGRATION & NATIONALITY

Work permit guidance for employers for health and social care.

This guidance details the roles within health and social care that an immigration work permit application will be considered; how long the immigration work permit will be valid for; the criteria that needs to be met and the option to extend their employment should an employee increase their vocational qualifications.

Introduction

Due to global shortages and severe difficulties in recruitment and retention of healthcare workers, especially healthcare support staff i.e. nursing auxiliary, carers, care assistants and home care workers the Committee for Home Affairs (the Committee) have recently agreed to include health and social care support workers into their work permit policy detailing the safeguarding criteria to be met.

The new policy introduces new categories within Sector B –Health. Work permits for support workers has been ‘broken down’ into two, with different durations of work permits on offer; semi-qualified (up to 3 years) and non-qualified (up to 1 year). There is also the option to change category if the employee has increased their vocational qualifications during their term of employment.

There is an expectation on behalf of the Committee for employers to follow a robust recruitment regime, including the verification of any vocational certificates and references to establish work experience validation in same or similar role for which the work permit is sought. The employer must be able to give assurance that the employee has sufficient command of English Language to fulfil all tasks associated with their job role to a reasonable standard.

Responsible recruitment is also expected, therefore compliance to the World Health Organisation (WHO) active non- recruitment red and amber list of countries should be adhered too.

WHO issue a list of countries where it is deemed unethical to recruit any level health and social care worker whom is of a nationality as noted in the active list, due to the continued development of the health care system within those countries. This list currently contains 47 countries red listed and 1 country on the amber list. With due consideration of the WHO non recruitment list of countries, the Committee has decided to comply with the WHO active list, therefore migrant workers of a nationality noted on the list are not eligible for a work permit issued in accordance with Sector B – Health.

Work permit Sector B - Health

This first category was already in the work permit policy, but has been included to ensure all options are understood.

Eligible Establishments:

Hospitals, the Medical Specialist Group, Nursing Homes, Residential Homes, Doctor Practices, Dental Practices, Physiotherapy Practices, Pharmacies and the Brecqhou Medical Centre.

Eligible Employment for Health and Social Care Professionals:

Professionally qualified medical/ health personal in full time employment for any healthcare post whose qualifications are recognised by the Committee for Health and Social Care i.e. doctor, nurse, physiotherapist, midwife, dentist, pharmacist (this list is not exhaustive).

- Can be issued an immigration work permit for up to 5 years
- Can accrue time towards settlement
- Can apply for Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) provided ILR/population management criteria is met
- English language requirement is met when converting professional registration to practice in UK.
- Population Management employment permit and a UK visa required.

Supporting documents:

Schedule of professional qualifications with confirmation from employer that professional qualifications and any references relating to experience have been verified.

New option 1

Here is a breakdown of the new category for semi qualified staff who will be able to get an immigration work permit valid for up to 3 years.

Eligible Employment for health and social support workers:

Auxiliary nurse, health care assistant (hospital worker), health care support worker, nursing assistant, nursing auxiliary.

OR

Care assistant, care worker, resident warden, carer, homecare assistant, home carer, support worker (care/nursing homes and government employed home carers - not independent staff or for a private residency).

OR

Senior care workers: senior care assistant, senior carer, senior support worker (government welfare services), team leaders (care/nursing homes)

Semi-qualified support workers:

An Immigration work permit may be issued for full time employment with proof of a level 3 of a Vocational Qualification, in health and social care or minimum level 2 working towards level 3.

- An Immigration work permit can be issued for up to 36 months (3 years)
- Does require English language test
- Does require recognised vocational certificates minimum level two
- Can apply to extend their employment provided Level 3 has been obtained
- Will accrue time towards settlement
- Must abide by the WHO active responsible resources list of countries
- Population Management employment permit and a UK visa required.

Supporting documents:

Proof of vocational qualifications with confirmation from employer that vocational qualifications and any references relating to experience have been verified.

Proof of English language as noted in paragraph 8) of the Sector based scheme in the work permit policy is required to be met.

Certificates and references, should be in English, where it is not possible for a reference or certificates to be in English, it must be accompanied by a notarised translation.

New option 2

Here is a breakdown of the new category for non-qualified staff who will be able to get an immigration work permit valid for up to 1 year.

Eligible Employment for health and social support workers:

Auxiliary nurse, health care assistant (hospital worker), health care support worker, nursing assistant, nursing auxiliary.

OR

Care assistant, care worker, resident warden, carer, homecare assistant, home carer, support worker (care/nursing homes and government employed home carers - not independent staff or for a private residency).

OR

Senior care workers: senior care assistant, senior carer, senior support worker (government welfare services), team leaders (care/nursing homes)

Non-qualified health and social care support workers:

An Immigration work permit may be granted for full time employment with proof of a minimum two years' experience in same/similar post.

- The immigration work permit can be issued for up to 12 months
- Requires minimum 2 years' experience; must be within the last 10 years
- Does **not** require English language criteria as noted in paragraph 8), of the Sector based scheme in this work permit policy to be met. However, the employer needs to be satisfied and can confirm the applicant has sufficient command of the English language to undertake all aspects of his/her duties to a good standard.

- If the employee upskills during their stay, the employer can apply for further leave provided the employee can meet the criteria for semi-qualified support worker (as detailed above)
- Must abide by the WHO active responsible resources list of countries
- Population Management employment permit and a UK visa required.

Supporting documents:

Employment references, where possible in English, must show at least 2 years' experience in the same or a similar full time job for which the permit is sought. The minimum 2 years' experience must have been gained within the previous 10 years from the time of the application - relevant training may also be taken into consideration. Where it is not possible for a reference or certificates to be in English, it must be accompanied by a notarised translation. Examples of supporting documentation include; Certificates gained at a bona fides training institute, copies of pay slips (headed paper), bank statements showing monthly salary, previous employment contracts, previous work identification, relevant merit certificates (this list is not exhaustive).