

GLAA (Gang Masters and Labour Abuse) Awareness Update

I have recently had an awareness session from the GLAA and thought I would send out an update/refresher for you all. Further information/reading on the subject can be found here <https://www.gla.gov.uk/> where there are some useful video clips and educational tools.

My biggest take away from the training was that previously the focus has been on certain types of employment where trafficking is likely (car washes/ nail bars etc), which although is still relevant and correct the focus for spotting employment trafficking/ modern slavery now, is the person themselves.

This is due to traffickers now working differently and 'smarter' in how they carry out this crime. Previously traffickers would likely remove all documents from the victim and withhold finances. This can still very much be the case but what is more evident now is that traffickers are 'controlling' victims through means of coercion and control. Targeting those who are drug and alcohol dependent and using their addiction as a means of control or threatening the safety of victim's family back home.

Below is a breakdown of the signs to look out for

How to spot human trafficking

Restricted freedom

Victims may:

- not be in possession of their passports or other travel or identity documents, as those documents are being held by someone else
- be unable to leave their work environment
- show signs that their movements are being controlled
- be unable to move freely
- be threatened with being handed over to the authorities
- be subject to security measures and controls to keep them on the work premises
- depend on their employer for work, transport and accommodation without any choice
- be controlled through religion, witchcraft, juju etc
- have limited contact with their families or with people outside of their immediate environment
- be unable to communicate freely with others
- be forced to shop at a place they would not choose
- have no access to medical care
- be in a situation of dependence
- be given only leftovers to eat
- come from a place known to be a source of human trafficking
- be subjected to violence or threats of violence against themselves or against their family members and loved ones
- be found in or connected to a type of location likely to be used for exploiting people
- have false identity documents

Behaviour

Victims may:

- be unfamiliar with the local language
- act as if they were instructed by someone else
- allow others to speak for them when addressed directly
- be distrustful of the authorities
- be afraid of revealing their immigration status
- have limited or no social interaction either in the workplace or at their accommodation
- believe that they must work against their will
- never leave the workplace without their employer
- show fear or anxiety
- feel that they cannot leave
- have to resort to crime in order to get food or money for food
- may need to scavenge for food
- be forced to commit crime if there is no work available for them
- have acted on the basis of false promises

Working conditions

Victims may:

- have no contract
- be unable to negotiate working conditions
- be unable to choose when or where they work
- be forced to work under certain conditions
- work excessively long hours over long periods
- not have any days off
- not be dressed adequately for the work they do: for example, they may lack protective equipment or warm clothing
- lack basic training or professional licences

Accommodation

Victims may:

- not know their home or work address
- not have been able to give their address to friends or relatives
- live in poor or substandard accommodation
- have no choice where they live or who they live with
- live in groups in the same place where they work and leave those places infrequently, if at all
- live in degrading, unsuitable places, such as agricultural or industrial buildings

Finances

Victims may:

- receive little or no payment

- have no access to their earnings
- be disciplined through punishment or fines
- be under the perception that they are bonded by debt
- have had the fees for their transport to the country of destination paid for by facilitators, whom they must payback by working or providing services in the destination
- be told that they can pay debts for transport or accommodation when they are found work
- be charged for services they don't want or need
- be forced to open bank accounts
- be forced to sign documents to receive social security benefits, credit agreements or loans

Appearance

Victims may:

- suffer injuries that appear to be the result of an assault
- suffer injuries or impairments typical of certain jobs or control measures
- suffer injuries that appear to be the result of the application of control measures

None of these indicators in isolation or combination can give you complete certainty, sometimes it will be a case of acting on your instinct that something is not right.

<https://www.gla.gov.uk/who-we-are/modern-slavery/who-we-are-modern-slavery-spot-the-signs/>

Reporting a concern

During the training the GLAA stated that they do not require certainty when reporting a concern. It is helpful to gain as much information as you can but don't let the lack of information (name, DOB etc.) stop you from raising a concern. If it's just your instincts or 'gut feeling' this is still valid and should always be reported.

How to report human trafficking

The best way to make a referral is online at <https://www.gla.gov.uk/report-issues/english-report-form> where you can complete a form.

If you have noticed something or have concerns and have made a referral for someone please complete a form on the 'safe' safeguarding database where an alert will be automatically generated the Forum Designated Safeguarding Lead for review (training on the use of this data base will be given in the next few weeks).

If you are unsure of the situation and what steps to take next, discuss with you line manager or the DSL.