

Government launches Health and Care Visa to ensure UK health and care services have access to the best global talent

The Home Secretary and Secretary of State for Health and Social Care have today announced the new Health and Care Visa will be launched this Summer, creating a new fast-track visa route for eligible health and care professionals and delivering on a key manifesto commitment.

They have also today announced further details on how the exemption to the Immigration Health Surcharge will work for health and care staff, who will now be permanently exempt from this charge.

The Home Secretary and Health and Social Care Secretary have together developed the Health and Care Visa to demonstrate the government's commitment to deliver for the NHS and wider health and care sector. It is designed to make it easier and quicker for the best global health professionals to work in the NHS, for NHS commissioned service providers, and in eligible occupations in the social care sector.

The legislation needed to open this new route will be laid in Parliament today and health professionals will be able to apply from August.

The new Health and Care Visa will come with a reduced visa application fee compared to that paid by other skilled workers, including exemption from the Immigration Health Surcharge. Health and care professionals applying on this route can also expect a decision on whether they can work in the UK within just three weeks, following biometric enrolment. Those working in health and social care who do not qualify for the Health and Care Visa will still be able to claim a reimbursement from the Immigration Health Surcharge if they have paid this on or after 31 March.

Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

We are indebted to overseas health and care professionals for their tremendous contributions, not just in saving thousands of lives throughout this crisis, but for the vital role they play year-round.

This new visa is part of our new immigration system making it quicker, cheaper and easier for the best and brightest health and care professionals from around the globe to work in our brilliant NHS.

Health and care professionals from all over the world have played a vital

role in hospitals and care homes across the country fighting coronavirus. The introduction of the Health and Care Visa follows a number of unprecedented measures to show the UK's gratitude to health workers from overseas.

Secretary of State for Health and Social Care Matt Hancock said:

Our health and care system has always had a proud tradition of welcoming overseas staff to work, train and live in the UK, and I'm proud that the NHS is a destination of choice for talented people from around the world.

The unwavering commitment, skill and compassion staff have shown during the fight against this deadly virus is nothing short of phenomenal, and the reimbursement of the immigration health surcharge recognises the enormous contribution of those who have come to the UK to work in health and social care.

I'm incredibly proud of our health and care workforce and look forward to welcoming new professionals from across the globe to continue the fantastic work to ensure our health system remains the best in the world.

Right across the immigration system the Home Office is already supporting frontline healthcare staff through initiatives such as visa extensions and the creation of the bereavement scheme.

The Prime Minister has previously announced that health and social care workers will be permanently exempt from the Immigration Health Surcharge going forward, and Immigration Health Surcharge payments made since 31 March will also be refunded.

As part of the launch of the Health and Care Visa, those who apply via the visa and their dependants will be exempt from the Immigration Health Surcharge. The government has already begun refunding Immigration Health Surcharge payments for any healthcare professionals on Tier 2 visas who have paid since 31 March 2020, and this process will continue. More information will be published on the Immigration Health Surcharge GOV.UK pages for customers to contact us directly if they believe they are due a refund. The Department of Health and Social Care is currently working with the sector to set up operational arrangements for reimbursing health and social care staff outside the scope of the Health and Care visa. These arrangements will commence from 1 October in 6 month reimbursements.

The new Health and Care Visa will apply to eligible roles within the health and care sector. The events of recent months have illustrated just what a crucial role the care sector plays in UK society. The government is working closely with the sector to support and recognise the contributions of care workers. This includes a widespread focus on training and introducing a proper career structure to provide opportunities for those in the sector and makes it an attractive profession for prospective carers.

The independent Migration Advisory Committee has been very clear that immigration is not the answer to the challenges in the social care sector and, as we implement the new immigration system, we want employers to focus on investing in our domestic workforce.

Welsh Secretary visits company developing Covid-19 beating technology

On his first official engagement in Wales since the easing of coronavirus lockdown restrictions, Mr Hart visited Creo Medical, where he heard how the company will use a £2m Cardiff Capital Region investment to develop its Cool Plasma technology which the company says has been shown to be effective in inactivating and decontaminating the Covid-19 virus.

In response to the pandemic Creo Medical will prioritise developing pioneering technology that meets the urgent needs created by Covid-19, including sterilisation of PPE and medical equipment.

The £2m loan, repayable over five years, has been provided by the Cardiff Capital Region. The UK Government is committed to supporting ground-breaking research and development in Wales and has committed £500million to the Cardiff Capital Region, helping them to support innovative companies such as Creo Medical.

The Welsh Secretary was also shown Creo's range of advanced energy surgical endoscopy products. Products that are already being used to revolutionise bowel cancer treatment and could soon be used to treat other forms of cancer, such as lung and pancreatic cancer.

Secretary of State for Wales Simon Hart said:

It is fantastic to see Welsh companies stepping up to the challenges created by this pandemic and developing technology that can make a real difference in the fight against Covid-19.

The Cardiff Capital Region's £2 million investment will boost the innovative research that is already taking place at Creo Medical and help enhance south Wales' position as a leader in the development of medical technology.

Craig Gulliford, Chief Executive Officer of Creo, said:

We were very pleased to welcome the Secretary of State for Wales to

our facilities here in Chepstow. We are proud to have taken our expertise in developing innovative medical devices and applied them to our plasma technology to develop products that could help halt the spread of Coronavirus.

Wales has a strong reputation for producing technology rich and innovative life sciences companies and I am delighted we have established a platform to develop critical medical tools here in the UK that will benefit cancer patients worldwide, and to protect our nation against a resurgence of COVID-19.

Peter Fox, Leader of Monmouthshire County Council and Vice Chair of Cardiff Capital Region Cabinet, said:

Cardiff Capital Region Cabinet is delighted to support Creo Medical in developing their Cool Plasma technology. This tremendous innovation in sterilisation couldn't have come forward at a better time and this new technology will be a game changer in killing bacteria and viruses and has already proved that it can be effective against COVID-19.

The MedTech industry is a key area of development and opportunity for the Cardiff Capital Region. It is fantastic we have Creo in our midst – a leading light in medical science. Providing this loan ensures this crucial technology can be developed at speed.

Our region is an exciting place to be and our City Deal stands ready to unlock further opportunity. We are so pleased to be working with forward thinking companies such as Creo medical and we look forward to working with them.

Creo Medical's expertise as an innovative medical device designer has been established through its range of advanced energy surgical devices that can be used endoscopically to safely treat a wide range of gastrointestinal complications including the early signs of bowel cancer. Pioneered in the UK by leading NHS endoscopists, the use of Creo's first product, Speedboat has been demonstrated to save NHS hospitals nearly £5,000 per procedure versus traditional surgical techniques. Creo's technology allows operations that previously took place under general anaesthetic to be done quickly and safely as outpatient procedures – providing benefits for the NHS in terms of economics and reducing waiting lists, but also providing better outcomes for patients.

UN Human Rights Council 44: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on Myanmar

Thank you, Madame President.

Thank you Special Rapporteur for your update. We welcome you to the role and encourage Myanmar to work with you as you fulfil your mandate.

Across Myanmar, the indiscriminate targeting of civilians remains a military tactic. The physical and mental suffering those civilians face, including sexual violence, is deeply disturbing.

The Tatmadaw's 'four cuts' strategy endangers lives disproportionately and causes lasting damage to property and livelihoods. This month in Rakhine, Tatmadaw 'clearance operations' saw villages shelled and burnt, with reports suggesting the displacement of at least 10,000 civilians.

Those civilians, and all communities affected by conflict, require humanitarian support. The UK urges the Myanmar authorities to allow humanitarian actors full and unfettered access to all areas, and to remove all obstacles, including the internet shutdown, that prevent civilians, not least the Rohingya, from receiving effective humanitarian support. The UK stands ready to support those in need.

Security Council Resolution 2532 of 1 July demanded an immediate cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda, including Myanmar. We call on the Tatmadaw to extend its unilateral ceasefire to all areas of fighting and urge all armed actors to take steps to engage in dialogue, protect civilians and abide by international law.

Special Rapporteur,

What can Myanmar's authorities do to ensure the full protection of civilians?

CMA publishes Annual Report 2019/2020

Throughout the year, the CMA delivered a substantial volume of work to ensure effective enforcement of competition law for the benefit of consumers. It issued 7 Competition Act decisions, imposing fines totalling £56 million on companies for breaking competition law, and it secured the disqualification of 10 directors who, through involvement in anti-competitive practices, have shown themselves to be unfit to be company directors.

The CMA continued to work to ensure consumers, including the vulnerable, can access markets, get a good deal from suppliers and be protected from unfair trading. It secured consumer protection commitments from 29 companies in 4 investigations. It continued action to [stop care home residents from being unfairly treated in the fees they are charged](#), [launched enforcement action into leasehold properties](#) to ensure homeowners are protected and developed [guidance for IVF clinics](#) to allow patients to make informed choices.

It also secured important changes to ensure that consumers are treated fairly when shopping online, whether [booking a hotel room](#), [buying tickets for concerts or sports events](#), [reading reviews when buying goods](#) or [buying musical instruments](#).

In its markets work, the CMA prioritised issues that directly impact on things that matter to consumers. It progressed its investigation into the [funeral sector](#), [proposed reforms to Scottish legal services](#) and [launched a market study into online platforms and its digital markets strategy](#), setting out how it will continue to protect consumers in rapidly developing markets, while fostering innovation.

The CMA acted to protect consumers from the harmful effects of anticompetitive mergers, reviewing 62 mergers and intervening where consumers needed protecting. This has resulted in remedies being put in place to ensure consumers are not harmed; companies abandoning mergers as a result of CMA investigations; and the CMA blocking mergers where we judged the risk of consumer harm to be especially great.

Looking ahead to its expanded role after the UK withdrawal from the EU, the CMA made substantial progress in ensuring that it has the necessary people, skills and infrastructure in place. It [published guidance to explain how it will conduct its work during the transition period](#) and contributed to and advised on the government's planning for various options for the creation of a domestic subsidy control regime.

At the end of the reporting year, the focus of the [CMA's work was on the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic](#). It acted quickly to ensure that its approach to enforcing competition law did not stand in the way of necessary co-operation between suppliers to maintain the supply of essential goods and services. The CMA also set up a COVID-19 taskforce to monitor market developments and gather evidence of harmful practices to enable it to intervene where it can, as quickly as it can.

[Recovered appeal: land west of Knights Hill Village, Grimston Road, South](#)

Wootton, Norfolk (ref: 3237042 – 14 July 2020)

Decision letter and Inspector's Report for a recovered appeal for residential development of the land to provide up to 600 dwellings, incorporating affordable housing, together with a local centre for uses A1, A2, A3 and/or A5 (600m²) with the total quantum of A1 net sales area not to exceed 279m² in the alternative, D2 community floorspace (up to 500m²), open space, formal sports pitches, a car park to serve Reffley Wood and associated development to include substations, drainage features, roads, cycle and pedestrian paths and other such works.