

Labour Standards Assurance System Audit

The NHS Supply Chain recognises its responsibility to ensure good social and ethical practices within its own operations and within its supply chain.

They also acknowledge that every supplier and worker deserves the right to live and work with dignity and respect, in decent and safe conditions and earn fair rates of pay and that under these conditions, both they and their companies benefit from increased commitment and productivity.

The NHS Supply Chain's Labour Standards Assurance System (LSAS) outlines the principles and guidelines they require their suppliers to comply with, in order to ensure that good labour standards are driven throughout the supply chain.

The Labour Standards Assurance System covers the range of policies, procedures and practices that an organisation employs to identify labour standards issues mitigate risks and drive improvement. It places the responsibility on the suppliers to demonstrate they have effective systems in place. It builds on principles of due diligence, extending this to routine consideration of labour standards, particularly important for suppliers doing business where evidence of labour standards issues exist.

The NHS Supply Chain understand that assuring this compliance will be a complex process and have therefore developed the Labour Standards Assurance System 'maturity matrix' which defines four possible levels of compliance. They are committed to supporting their suppliers as they continually improve their performance and progress through these levels.

We have recently had an LSAS audit at our offices as a pre-requisite to being invited to tender. Derek Boyden, Technical QA & Compliance Director said: “I am very proud to advise that for each of the 15 modules we scored a level 4 which is the maximum score on all areas. We were informed that only one other supplier to the entire NHS, not all are specific to clothing, has scored 4’s across all of the requirements. A special mention should go to Georgina Howard for the detailed preparation to assure that we were ready for the audit, without which we would not have had such a fantastic result.”

