

# Inspection Report

## Oberon Agency



## Oberon Agency

Type of service: Nursing Agency  
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Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

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## 1.0 Service information

<b>Organisation/Registered Provider:</b> Oberon Agency	<b>Registered Manager:</b> Mrs Caroline Malone
<b>Responsible Individual:</b> Mrs Brenda McKay	<b>Date registered:</b> 28/06/2022
<b>Person in charge at the time of inspection:</b> Mrs Brenda McKay	
<b>Brief description of the agency operates:</b> Oberon Agency is a nursing agency which supplies registered nurses to a range of health care providers. The nurses are supplied into a variety of hospital facilities within the Health and Social Care Trusts and also to one care home.	

## 2.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection was undertaken on 11 December 2023 between 9.30 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. The inspection was conducted by a care inspector, the RQIA Service Improvement Officer was also present throughout the inspection and supported the inspector with reviewing the Annual Quality Report.

The inspection examined the agency's governance and management arrangements, reviewing areas such as staff recruitment, professional registrations, staff induction and training and adult safeguarding. The reporting and recording of accidents and incidents, complaints, and whistleblowing was also reviewed.

No areas for improvement were identified.

Good practice was identified in relation to the monitoring of nurses' registrations with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), training, seeking feedback, governance and management arrangements in place.

For the purposes of the inspection report, the term 'service user' describes the hospitals or care homes, the agency's nurses are supplied to work in.

## 3.0 How we inspect

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how they were performing at the time of our inspection, highlighting both good practice

and any areas for improvement. It is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure compliance with legislation, standards and best practice, and to address any deficits identified during our inspections.

In preparation for this inspection, a range of information about the service was reviewed. This included any previous areas for improvement identified, registration information, and any other written or verbal information received from service users.

As a public-sector body, RQIA has a duty to respect, protect and fulfil the rights that people have under the Human Rights Act 1998 when carrying out our functions. In our inspections of nursing agencies, we are committed to ensuring that the rights of people who receive services are protected. This means we will seek assurances from service users that the agency takes all reasonable steps to promote people's rights. People in receipt of nursing care have the right to expect their dignity and privacy to be respected and to have their independence and autonomy promoted. They should also experience their individual choices and freedoms.

Information was provided to service users and staff on how they could provide feedback on the quality of services. This included an electronic survey.

#### 4.0 What people told us about the agency?

As part of the inspection process we spoke with a number of service users and registered nurses.

The information provided indicated that there were no concerns in relation to the agency.

Comments received included:

##### **Service users' comments:**

- "We have worked with Oberon Agency for several years now and they have always been professional and have been very helpful and responsive in any queries, concerns or issues raised. "
- "At present the nurse bank office has no concerns with Oberon Agency."
- "They are responsive regarding complaint communications."

##### **Registered Nurses' comments:**

- "Communication with Oberon has been satisfactory in my experience to date. There is always a very fast response to communication about shifts e.g. availability, timesheet requests etc."
- "Thankfully I have not needed to raise any issues or concerns but I know how to do so if necessary."
- "I have been working with Oberon for over a year now. I truly feel that they provide an excellent service. I am always able to contact a member of the team if needed no matter what time or day it may be. I feel very supported and respected. The training courses I attended with Oberon were exceptional. It is an absolute pleasure to be part of their team."
- "Oberon is an extremely professional company who offer a very personal and tailored service. The training offered throughout the year is of an excellent standard and staff will

always provide sufficient notification with regards to training due to expire. Without exception every member of staff I have dealt with have always been helpful and on many occasions have gone above and beyond to accommodate my shift requests or that of training. I have built up a professional relationship with the members of the booking team and have to say they are all amazing.”

- “I can honestly say I am extremely happy with everything Oberon has to offer. I cannot fault anything nor suggest any areas where improvements are needed. they are amazing.”
- “Oberon is amazing to work for! They’ve provided me with invaluable experience over many different fields of nursing. They have a great team who facilitate my specific requests which allows me to have a great work-life balance. I’ve never had an issue with communication. I’ve never had any issues or concerns but I know if there ever comes a time where I do the support and information Oberon will provide will be outstanding.”
- “I have been working with Oberon for 3 years now and I really appreciate the flexibility I have with this agency. I feel I have an excellent relationship with them. To me they are an exceptional agency in every way. They look after their nurses so well, any concerns I have are dealt with immediately and with so much professionalism. They are excellent at reminding everyone who works with them, when they need to update their training. Personally the agency is brilliant and there are no areas that need improving.”
- “I cannot speak highly enough of them all. Their communication skills are first class. They are always open and honest and always treat me with respect as I treat them also.”
- “I can wholeheartedly tell you that my experience with Oberon Agency at all levels has been fantastic. I do not see how they can improve their service.”

There were no responses to the electronic survey.

## 5.0 The inspection

### 5.1 What has this agency done to meet any areas for improvement identified at or since last inspection?

The last care inspection of the agency was undertaken on 20 October 2022 by a care inspector. A Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) was issued. This was reviewed by the care inspector and was validated during this inspection.

Areas for improvement from the last inspection on 20 October 2023		
Action required to ensure compliance with The Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005		Validation of compliance
<b>Area for improvement 1</b>  <b>Ref:</b> Regulation 12(1) (d)  <b>Stated:</b> First time	The registered person shall ensure that no nurse is supplied by the agency unless full and satisfactory information is available, which includes verification of the reasons for leaving former care employment  Ref: 5.2.1	<b>Met</b>

<b>To be completed by:</b> Immediately from the date of inspection	<b>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</b> The reasons for any gaps in employment, and reasons for leaving employment were recorded in pre-employment checks	
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## 5.2 Inspection findings

### 5.2.1 What systems are in place for staff recruitment and are they robust?

A review of the agency's staff recruitment records confirmed that pre-employment checks including criminal record checks (AccessNI), were completed and verified before registered nurses were supplied to the various health care settings.

### 5.2.2 What are the arrangements to ensure robust managerial oversight and governance?

A review of the records confirmed that all registered nurses were appropriately registered with the NMC. Information regarding registration details, renewal and revalidation dates was monitored by the manager; this system was reviewed and found to be in compliance with regulations and standards. Records had been retained of any referrals the agency made to the NMC.

It was good to note that registered nurses had supervisions undertaken in accordance with the agency's policies and procedures.

There was a system in place to ensure that the registered nurses were placed into settings where their skills closely matched the needs of patients. Nurses were provided with training appropriate to the requirements of the settings in which they were placed.

There were quality monitoring arrangements in place in compliance with Regulations and Standards. A review of the reports of the agency's quality monitoring established that there was engagement with service users and staff. Some written comments received from service users included:

- Happy with all nurses, all excellent.
- Oberon provide an excellent service, nurses are very competent and knowledgeable, booking team are always helpful.

It was noted that the reports routinely monitored any incidents as part of the monthly checks to identify any patterns or trends.

There was a system in place to ensure that complaints were managed in accordance with the agency's policy and procedure. No complaints were received since the last inspection.

No incidents had occurred that required investigation under the Serious Adverse Incidents (SAI) procedure.

The alphabetical list of staff employed by the agency was up to date.

The agency's registration certificate was up to date and displayed appropriately along with current certificates of public and employers' liability insurance.

## **6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement**

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Mrs Brenda McKay, Responsible Individual, and Mrs Caroline Malone, Registered Manager as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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