



# Announced Care Inspection Report 5 December 2018



## Balmoral Healthcare Agency Ltd

Type of service: Nursing Agency  
Address: 146 Malone Road, Belfast BT9 5LH  
Tel No: 02890380808  
Inspectors: Joanne Faulkner

[www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)

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Assurance, Challenge and Improvement in Health and Social Care

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and areas for improvement that exist in the service. The findings reported on are those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not exempt the service from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with legislation, standards and best practice.

## 1.0 What we look for



## 2.0 Profile of service

Balmoral Healthcare Agency Ltd is a nursing agency located in Belfast. The agency currently supplies registered nurses to Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) facilities and a number of private nursing homes within Northern Ireland.

### 3.0 Service details

<b>Organisation/Registered Provider:</b> Balmoral Healthcare Agency Ltd	<b>Registered Manager:</b> Sharon Dunn
<b>Responsible Individual(s):</b> Amanda Jane McCully	
<b>Person in charge at the time of inspection:</b> Sharon Dunn	<b>Date manager registered:</b> 09/09/2016

### 4.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection took place on 5 December 2018 from 10.30 to 16.00.

This inspection was underpinned by the Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005 and the Nursing Agencies Minimum Standards, 2008.

The inspection assessed progress with any areas for improvement identified during and since the last care inspection and to determine if the agency was delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the service was well led.

Evidence of good practice was found in relation to staff recruitment, induction and training, the agency's quality monitoring process and communication with service users and other relevant stakeholders.

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

The findings of this report will provide the agency with the necessary information to assist them to fulfil their responsibilities, enhance practice and service users' experience.

### 4.1 Inspection outcome

	Regulations	Standards
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	0	0

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Sharon Dunn, registered manager, as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.

Enforcement action did not result from the findings of this inspection.

## 4.2 Action/enforcement taken following the most recent care inspection dated 7 December 2017

Other than those actions detailed in the QIP no further actions were required to be taken following the most recent inspection on 7 December 2017.

## 5.0 How we inspect

Specific methods/processes used in this inspection include the following:

- discussion with the manager and administrative staff
- examination of records
- evaluation and feedback

Prior to inspection the following records were analysed:

- previous RQIA inspection report and QIP
- records of notifiable events
- any correspondence received by RQIA since the previous inspection

The following records were viewed during the inspection:

- recruitment records
- staff induction and training records
- records relating to staff supervision and appraisal
- records relating to Adult Protection
- monthly quality monitoring reports
- complaints records
- incident records
- Statement of Purpose
- Service User Guide

A range of policies and procedures viewed during the inspection were noted to have been issued or reviewed within the timescales as outlined within the minimum standards.

During the inspection the inspector met with the manager and administrative staff. At the request of the inspector, the manager was asked to display a poster within the agency's registered premises. The poster invited staff to provide their views by an electronic means to RQIA regarding the quality of service provision; no responses were received.

Areas for improvement identified at the last care inspection were reviewed and assessment of compliance recorded as met.

The inspector would like to thank the manager and administration staff for their support and co-operation throughout the inspection process.

The findings of the inspection were provided to the manager at the conclusion of the inspection.

**6.0 The inspection**

**6.1 Review of areas for improvement from the most recent inspection dated 7 December 2017**

The most recent inspection of the agency was an announced care inspection.

The completed QIP was returned and approved by the care inspector.

**6.2 Review of areas for improvement from the last care inspection dated 7 December 2017**

Areas for improvement from the last care inspection		
Action required to ensure compliance with The Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005		Validation of compliance
<b>Area for improvement 1</b> Ref: Regulation 14.(2) Stated: First time To be completed by: Immediate from the date of inspection	The registered person shall ensure that each employee of the agency (a)receives appropriate supervision;	<b>Met</b>
	<b>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</b> The inspector viewed evidence which indicated that registered nurses had received appropriate supervision in accordance with the agency’s policy and procedure.	

**6.3 Inspection findings**

**6.4 Is care safe?**

**Avoiding and preventing harm to patients and clients from the care, treatment and support that is intended to help them.**

The inspector reviewed staffing arrangements in place within the agency. It was noted that the agency’s recruitment policy outlines the procedures for ensuring that required staff pre-employment checks are completed prior to commencement of employment. The manager stated that registered nurses are not provided until all pre-employment checks have been satisfactorily completed and verified. Records viewed during the inspection indicated that required checks had been completed prior to the commencement of employment. The agency retains a record of checks completed; it was noted the information is reviewed and verified by the manager. In addition details of all checks are retained electronically.

Staff recruitment records viewed indicated that the agency's recruitment process is robust; it was noted that registered nurses are required to undergo annual Access NI checks.

The agency requires registered nurses to complete an initial induction and in addition to complete training in a range of mandatory areas prior to their commencement of employment. A record of induction provided to staff is maintained; records viewed outline the information and support provided to staff during the induction process. The agency requires that staff receive an induction at the commencement of a work placement. Staff are provided with induction information which was noted to include the agency's comprehensive staff handbook, a job description, key policies and details relating to booking and cancellation of shifts.

The manager stated that staff are not permitted to work if training updates have not been completed. Records viewed indicated that registered nurses are not provided until the required pre-employment checks and documentation relating to training have been received and verified.

The agency's supervision and appraisal policies outline the processes for staff supervision and appraisal; the manager stated that registered nurses are required to participate in supervision at least annually; staff are required to complete an annual appraisal. Records of staff supervision and appraisal indicated that staff had received supervision and appraisal in accordance with the agency's procedures. Feedback received from service users in relation to individual staff is discussed with the registered nurse during the appraisal process.

The agency has a system for recording training completed by staff and for highlighting training required; it was noted that the registered manager or administrator will inform registered nurses when training updates are required. The manager stated that registered nurses are not provided with work placements if required training updates have not been completed. The inspector viewed the agency's electronic system for recording staff training; it was noted that staff cannot be supplied for work if necessary training is not completed.

The inspector reviewed the agency's provision for the welfare, care and protection of patients. It was identified that the agency's policy and procedures reflect information contained within the DHSSPS regional policy 'Adult Safeguarding Prevention and Protection in Partnership' issued in July 2015. The registered manager is the identified Adult Safeguarding Champion (ASC).

Registered nurses employed by the agency are provided with information relating to the agency's safeguarding and whistleblowing policies during their induction and in the agency's staff handbook. It was identified from discussions with the manager and documentation viewed that staff are required to complete adult safeguarding training during their initial induction and in three yearly updates thereafter. Training records viewed indicated that staff had completed appropriate training in relation to adult protection.

The manager could describe the procedure for reporting any incidents of suspected, alleged or actual abuse and the mechanism for liaising with the appropriate bodies in relation to any investigation they are required to be involved in. It was noted that the monthly quality monitoring audit, reviews referrals made in relation to adult protection.

The inspector reviewed records maintained in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults; discussions with the manager and documentation viewed indicated that the agency has acted in accordance with their policies and procedures in relation to adult safeguarding referrals

made since the previous inspection. Information viewed was noted to be comprehensive and included details of liaison with HSCT adult safeguarding representatives and other relevant stakeholders were relevant.

The inspection reviewed the agency's arrangements for identifying, managing and where possible eliminating unnecessary risk to patients health, welfare and safety.

The manager could describe the procedure for appropriately matching the individual skills of the registered nurses employed to the needs of the service users; this includes the completion of a skills and experience profile during the interview process. The manager could describe the process for appropriately assessing the requirements of individual service users; it was noted that this process also included assessing the knowledge, skills, training, experience and suitability of the nurse to be provided. The agency provides service users with relevant staff profiles when confirmation of a shift is provided; the inspector noted that those viewed included details of skills/competencies, experience, training and registration status with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC).

The agency has a system for monitoring and recording the registration status of nurses with the NMC; the manager could describe the process for checking the NMC register on a monthly basis to ensure all staff are registered and to identify if any staff have been removed from or had conditions placed on their registration. The agency retains details of individual staff registration status and expiry dates electronically.

The agency requests that service users complete feedback reports in relation to the performance of registered nurses provided; the manager highlighted the challenges in receiving feedback.

### **Comments received from feedback forms**

- “Excellent nurse; hard to find fault on her standard of care and professionalism.”
- \*\*\*\* is very efficient and an excellent nurse; a pleasure to work with.”
- “Excellent nurse I would like her to be looking after me. Patient’s ask when she is working again.”
- “\*\*\*\* is fantastic with patients and is a very conscientious nurse who would always give 100%.”
- “\*\*\*\* is fabulous, polite and efficient and always happy.”
- “Office staff are superb.”
- “Friendly and efficient staff.”

The agency's registered premises are suitable for the operation of the agency as described in the Statement of Purpose. During the inspection records were noted to be retained securely and in an organised manner; personal computers (PC's) were noted to be password protected. The manager could describe the additional measures taken to ensure compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

### **Areas of good practice**

Areas of good practice were identified in relation to the agency's staff recruitment, induction, training, supervision and appraisal processes, and the management of adult safeguarding matters.



## Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	0	0

### 6.5 Is care effective?

**The right care, at the right time in the right place with the best outcome.**

The inspector reviewed the agency's arrangements for appropriately responding to and meeting the needs of people who use the service. Information relating to the nature and range of services provided is outlined within the Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide.

The agency's record's management policy which details the process for the creation, storage and retention of records has been updated in line with GDPR. It was noted that records viewed were maintained in a well organised and secure manner and in accordance with legislation, standards and the organisational policy. Staff employed within the agency have recently received information relating to GDPR.

Discussions with the manager, service users and documentation viewed provided evidence that the agency has effective systems in place to continually monitor, audit and review the effectiveness and quality of the service provided to service users. The systems include processes for the review of training compliance, registered nurses' registration status with the NMC, audits of complaints, incidents and referrals relating to adult protection. The registered manager meets at least monthly with the registered person to discuss the effectiveness of the service provided and to review any identified matters of concern.

Monthly quality monitoring audits are completed and a monthly report developed. The reports contain details of the review of incidents, complaints and safeguarding referrals and includes comments made by service users and relevant stakeholders in relation to the quality of the service provided.

Systems to promote and achieve effective communication with service users, the agency's registered nurses and other relevant stakeholders were evident on inspection. Discussions with the manager and service users provided evidence that the agency seeks to develop and maintain effective working relationships with service users. Service users are informed of the process for contacting the agency to discuss concerns in relation to the competency of registered nurses provided. The agency has systems in place for obtaining the comments of service users in relation to staff provided; they include staff feedback forms and ad hoc phone contact with service users.

The manager described the process for addressing concerns relating to individual staff members; it indicated that the agency's procedure for dealing with concerns is effective. It was identified that the agency has on occasions made referrals to the NMC in relation to the practice of individual staff nurses; detailed records are retained.



## Areas of good practice

Areas of good practice were identified in relation to record keeping, communication with service users, the agency's training programme and systems for reviewing the quality of the service provided.

## Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	0	0

### 6.6 Is care compassionate?

**Patients and clients are treated with dignity and respect and should be fully involved in decisions affecting their treatment, care and support.**

It was identified that the agency's staff handbook and information provided to all registered nurses during their initial induction includes a number of key policies and procedures including the agency's confidentiality policy. The agency's policy relating to confidentiality outlines the actions required by staff to ensure confidentiality is maintained at all times. It was identified that staff are required to sign a confidentiality agreement and GDPR declaration as part of the agency's application process.

The agency has on call arrangements in place to ensure that staff and service users can report concerns they may have regarding a placement or to access support and guidance at any time including out of hours.

The agency has a range of methods for obtaining the views of service users in relation to staff performance; it includes requesting that service users complete a feedback proforma for staff provided to work. The inspector viewed feedback that had been received by the agency and noted that information was recorded in relation to matters that needed further action. The manager and administrative staff described the processes for engaging with service users in order to obtain feedback; this includes the agency's quality monitoring process and calls to the service users to obtain their views as to the quality of the service provided.

Discussions with the manager and administrative staff during the inspection indicated that the promotion of values such as dignity, choice, equality and respect were embedded in the culture and ethos of the organisation.

IT was noted that staff are provided with the agency's 'Whistleblowing Policy' which outlines the responsibility of staff in highlighting concerns or issues relating to poor practice and the process for raising concerns.

The agency has systems for obtaining the views and opinions of service users. The manager described the processes for receiving feedback from service users following the provision of registered nurses. Formal processes to record and respond to service user feedback are maintained through the agency's quality monitoring and complaints processes.

## Areas of good practice

Areas of good practice were identified in relation to communication and ongoing engagement with service users, and the promotion of values such as confidentiality, dignity and respect.

## Areas for improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	Regulations	Standards
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	0	0

### 6.7 Is the service well led?

**Effective leadership, management and governance which creates a culture focused on the needs and experience of service users in order to deliver safe, effective and compassionate care.**

The agency's management and governance systems in place to meet the needs of service users were reviewed. It was identified that the agency has a range of policies and procedures in place which were noted to have been reviewed and updated in accordance with the timescales as outlined within the Minimum Standards, relevant legislation and guidelines. Policies are retained both electronically and in a paper format stored within the agency's office. Staff are provided with a number of key policies during induction; and in addition can access them in the agency's office.

Discussions with the manager and administrative staff, and documentation viewed indicated that the agency's governance arrangements promote the identification and management of risk. These include the provision of relevant policies and procedures, ongoing monitoring of staff training, registration status of staff with the NMC, monitoring of feedback received, complaints, safeguarding referrals, accidents and incidents including those notifiable to RQIA.

The agency's complaints policy clearly details the process and timescales for managing complaints; records viewed indicated that the agency has managed complaints received in accordance with the policy and procedures. Discussions with the manager demonstrated that they had a clear understanding of the agency's complaints procedure and the process for effectively managing complaints. It was identified from records viewed that the agency has a robust process for recording details of complaints received and the actions taken, and for reviewing complaints on a monthly basis as part of the quality monitoring process. Records viewed were noted to contain detailed accounts of the outcome of the investigation of the complaint received and the actions taken by the agency.

The agency's incident policy outlines the process for managing incidents and the reporting arrangements for RQIA and other relevant agencies. It was identified that the agency has an effective system for retaining a record of accidents, incidents and safeguarding referrals made and of actions taken. No incidents have been reported to RQIA since the previous care inspection.

It was identified that the agency has management and governance systems in place to drive quality improvement. The agency's arrangements for the ongoing monitoring of incidents and complaints were reviewed. The manager stated that the agency has a process for continually reviewing the service provided to identify areas for improving the quality of the service.

Electronic and paper records viewed by the inspector provided evidence of appropriate staff induction, training, supervision and appraisal. The agency has a system for recording staff training and for identifying training needs of staff provided and for reviewing the registration of staff with the appropriate regulatory body.

The organisational and management structure of the agency identifies lines of accountability and the roles and responsibilities of staff. It was identified that registered nurses are provided with a job description at the commencement of employment which clearly outlines the responsibilities of their job role and in addition their roles are discussed at individual appraisal meetings. Staff are required to highlight areas where they feel that they need additional training.

The agency's Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide are kept under review; it was identified that the records were required to be reviewed to include the updated contact details for RQIA. Assurances were provided to the inspector that this would be actioned.

On the date of inspection the RQIA certificate of registration was displayed appropriately and was reflective of the service provided.

Discussion with the manager and administrative staff provided evidence that the agency promotes effective collaborative working relationships with service users. The agency has a process for ensuring that they actively seek feedback from service users following staff having been provided.

The agency has effectively responded to the QIP issued following the previous inspection.

### **Areas of good practice**

Areas of good practice were identified in relation to the agency's policies and procedures, the agency's governance arrangements, engagement with stakeholders and the management and monitoring of complaints and incidents.

### **Areas for improvement**

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

	<b>Regulations</b>	<b>Standards</b>
<b>Total number of areas for improvement</b>	0	0

## **7.0 Quality improvement plan**

There were no areas for improvement identified during this inspection, and a QIP is not required or included, as part of this inspection report.



The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority  
9th Floor  
Riverside Tower  
5 Lanyon Place  
BELFAST  
BT1 3BT

**Tel** 028 9536 1111  
**Email** [info@rqia.org.uk](mailto:info@rqia.org.uk)  
**Web** [www.rqia.org.uk](http://www.rqia.org.uk)  
 [@RQIANews](https://twitter.com/RQIANews)