

# Inspection Report

20 February 2023



## Sciensus

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> Sciensus Pharma Services Limited	<b>Registered Manager:</b> Mrs Heather McNeely
<b>Responsible Individual:</b> Mr Nicholas Robin Conway	<b>Date registered:</b> 14 August 2008
<b>Person in charge at the time of inspection:</b> Mrs Heather McNeely	
<b>Brief description of the agency operates:</b>  This is a nursing agency which operates from offices located in Belfast. The agency currently supplies registered nurses to provide specialised care and treatments to patients in their own homes.	

## 2.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection was undertaken on 20 February 2023 between 10.00 a.m. and 3.00 p.m. by the care inspector.

The inspection focused on the agency's governance and management arrangements as well as staff recruitment, staff' registrations with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), adult safeguarding, notifications, complaints, whistleblowing, supervision, and training.

Good practice was identified in relation to the monitoring of nurses' registrations with the NMC. There were good governance and management arrangements in place, to ensure that the agency is compliant with the Nursing Agencies Regulations and Standards.

Service users consulted with said that they were very satisfied with the quality of the nurses supplied and with the responsiveness of the agency's management.

### 3.0 How we inspect

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.

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.

Prior to inspection we reviewed the information held by RQIA about this agency. This included notifiable incidents and written and verbal communication received since the previous care inspection.

The inspection focused on contacting the service users and staff to find out their views on the agency and reviewing relevant documents relating to the agency's governance and management arrangements. This included checking how registered nurses' registrations with the NMC were monitored by the agency.

We discussed any incidents that had occurred with the manager and reviewed the quality monitoring processes to ensure that these areas were routinely monitored as part of the monthly checks in accordance with Regulation 20. It was noted that complaints and adult safeguarding were also reviewed as part of the quality monitoring process.

Service users and nurses were invited to complete an electronic survey to provide feedback to the RQIA.

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

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

As part of the inspection we spoke to a number of service users and staff. The information provided by service users indicated that there were no concerns in relation to the service provided by the agency. Service users confirmed that they were satisfied with the standard of the nurses being supplied and the responsiveness of the agency to any issues that may arise.

Service users' comments:

- "Girls are very good, keep in contact with me. They are fantastic."
- "No concerns, nothing at all I have a problem with."
- "Nurses are very pleasant; I am happy with them in my house. The service is very handy for me."

- They are a good support; you build up a relationship with them.
- The nurses told us that they were satisfied with the support provided by the nursing agency.

Comments included:

- “I can raise issues with the manager, they are very approachable and take on concerns.”
- “Communication is good; I feel we provide a good service.”
- “No concerns, I love my job we have a great team and good support.
- “The new manager is very supportive and good at sorting things out.”
- “For a while we were short of nurses and we had to do longer days sometimes, but things are improving and we have new staff being trained up at present.”

## 5.0 The inspection

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

Due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Department of Health (DoH) directed RQIA to continue to respond to ongoing areas of risk identified in services. An inspection was not undertaken in the 2021-2022 inspection year, due to the impact of the first surge of Covid-19.

The last care inspection of the agency was undertaken on 4 March 2021 by a care inspector and no areas for improvement were identified.

## 5.2 Inspection findings

### 5.2.1 Are there robust systems in place for staff recruitment?

The review of the agency’s staff recruitment records confirmed that recruitment was managed in accordance with the Regulations and Minimum Standards before nurses were supplied to patients.

### 5.2.2 Are there robust governance processes in place?

A review of the records confirmed that all staff provided 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.

It was identified that staff had completed a robust induction programme lasting 12 weeks. Staff had been required to complete relevant competency assessments. Supervision and appraisals had been completed.

There was a system in place to ensure that the nurses provided had the skills required to provide the care to the patients. Nurses were provided with training appropriate to the requirements of their roles. Given the complex nature of the tasks completed by the registered nurses they are required to complete training in a wide range of areas.

This training included Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), Adult Safeguarding and Child Protection. The agency's Practice Development Nurse audits staff practice at least twice annually.

The content of the Adult Safeguarding policy and training was reviewed and were noted to reflect the regional guidance in Northern Ireland. No adult safeguarding referrals had been made since the last inspection.

The quality monitoring processes were reviewed to ensure that complaints and any incidents were routinely monitored as part of the monthly checks in line with Regulation 20 of Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005. It was good to note that complaints were monitored on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis, to identify any patterns or trends.

It was established during discussions with the manager that the agency had not been involved in any Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs), Significant Event Analyses (SEAs) or Early Alerts (EAs).

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

Records were retained in accordance with the Nursing Agencies Regulations.

There was evidence that the agency had appropriate Public and Employers Liability in place.

## **6.0 Conclusion**

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



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