

Inspection Report

16 August 2023



The Scottish Nursing Guild

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

Organisation/Registered Provider: Independent Clinical Services Ltd	Registered Manager: Ms Kate Nicholson-Florence
Responsible Individual: Ms Sara Llian James	Date registered: 5 December 2019
Person in charge at the time of inspection: Ms Kate Nicholson-Florence	
Brief description of the agency operates: The Scottish Nursing Guild is registered with RQIA as a Nursing Agency and currently supplies registered nurses to Health and Social Care Trust (HSCT) acute areas and community settings. The agency operates from an office located in Belfast. The Scottish Nursing Guild also acts as a Recruitment Agency and supplies Health Care Assistants (HCA) to various healthcare settings. RQIA does not regulate Recruitment Agencies.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An announced inspection was undertaken on 16 August 2023 10.10 a.m. and 4.10 p.m. The inspection was conducted by a care inspector.

The inspection examined the agency's governance and management arrangements, reviewing areas including but not limited to: staff recruitment; professional registrations; staff induction and training; adult safeguarding arrangements; and the reporting and recording of accidents/incidents.

Good practice was identified in relation to the monitoring of nurses' registrations with the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and staff training. There were good governance and management arrangements in place.

An area for improvement was identified in relation to staff recruitment.

For the purposes of the inspection report, the term 'service user' describes the hospitals, community settings 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 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 no concerns in regards to the agency. We didn't have any supply issues and the agency were very helpful and done all they could to cover last minute shifts."
- "No issues regarding supply or quality. If an incident occurred the agency were very prompt in addressing."
- "Our experience with the agency was very satisfactory. If there were any concerns the agency was very responsive and matters were resolved satisfactorily."

Registered Nurses' comments:

- "The Guild is an excellent agency to work for. I am very well supported by the manager. It is very clear that patient care is paramount."
- "The manager is very approachable and supportive. She has very high standards in regards to patient care. There is very good training provided. Without doubt, the best agency I have worked for."

- “I went through a very detailed recruitment and induction process. There is always someone at the end of the phone to discuss matters with.”
- “I have had supervision with the manager.”

No responses were received 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 24 June 2021 by a care inspector. No areas for improvement were identified.

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.

We reviewed two recruitment records. One recruitment record identified that the system for exploring gaps in employment was not sufficiently robust. This has been identified as an area for improvement.

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 positive to note that registered nurses had supervisions undertaken in accordance with the agency’s policies and procedures. It was also positive to note that training needs were addressed in relation to any reported incidents.

There was a system in place to receive feedback in relation to the nurses’ practice.

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.

This training included Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards (DoLS), adult safeguarding and moving and handling, as appropriate to their job roles.

The content of the Adult Safeguarding policy and training was reviewed and was noted to reflect the regional guidance in Northern Ireland.

The agency had an identified Adult Safeguarding Champion.

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.

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. Where complaints were received since the last inspection, these were appropriately managed and were reviewed as part of the agency's quality monitoring process.

No incidents had occurred that required investigation under the Serious Adverse Incidents (SAIs) procedures.

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

Records were retained in accordance with the Nursing Agencies Regulations.

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

An area for improvement has been identified where action is required to ensure compliance with The Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	1	0

The area for improvement and details of the QIP were discussed with Ms Kate Nicholson-Florence, Registered Manager, and the Service Manager, as part of the inspection process. The timescales for completion commence from the date of inspection.

Quality Improvement Plan	
Action required to ensure compliance with The Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005	
<p>Area for improvement 1</p> <p>Ref: Regulation 12 (1) Schedule 3 (8)</p> <p>Stated: First time</p> <p>To be completed by: Immediate from the date of the inspection</p>	<p>The registered person shall ensure that no nurse worker is supplied by the agency unless— (d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 3.</p> <p>This relates specifically to the need for a satisfactory written explanation of any gaps in employment.</p> <p>Ref: 5.2.1</p>
	<p>Response by registered person detailing the actions taken:</p> <p>An audit of 30 files was undertaken by the recruitment manager and clinical lead and no further incidents were identified, all the team have been reminded of the regulatory requirements, ongoing reviews will be completed as part of the monthly reporting mechanism.</p>

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