

The Regulation and
Quality Improvement
Authority

Ashfield Healthcare Ltd
RQIA ID: 11144
Ashfield House
Resolution Road
Ashby de la Zouch
Leicestershire
LE65 1HW
Tel: 08708501234

Inspector: Maire Marley
Inspection ID: IN024192

Email:
Sally.Woolston@ashfieldhealthcare.com

**Unannounced Care Inspection
of
Ashfield Healthcare Ltd
on
25 February 2016**

The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3BT
Tel: 028 9051 7500 Fax: 028 9051 7501 Web: www.rqia.org.uk

1. Summary of Inspection

An unannounced care inspection took place on 25 February 2016 from 14.00 to 17.00. Overall on the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering safe, effective and compassionate care. Areas for improvement were identified and are set out in the Quality Improvement Plan appended to this report. This inspection was underpinned by The Nursing Agencies Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, and The DHSPSS Nursing Agencies Minimum Standards (2008).

2. Actions/Enforcement Taken Following the Last Inspection

No enforcement action has been taken as a result of the last inspection.

3. Actions/Enforcement Resulting From This Inspection

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

4. Inspection Outcome

This inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations being made. Findings of the inspection can be found in the main body of the report.

5. Service Details

Registered Organisation/Registered Provider Ashfield Healthcare Ltd/Ian Rubin	Registered Manager: Sally Ruth Woolston
Person in Charge of the Agency at the Time of Inspection: Sally Woolston	Date Registered: 9 October 2014
Number of Registered Nurses, Health Visitors and Midwives on the Agency's Books: 1	

6. Inspection Focus

The inspection sought to assess progress with the issues raised during and since the previous inspection and to establish the level of compliance achieved with respect to the following themes:

Theme 1: Nurse Training - The agency has procedures in place to ensure all nurses are appropriately trained and qualified for their roles.

Theme 2: Vulnerable adults and children are protected from abuse.

7. Methods/Process

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

- Discussion with the registered manager
- Discussion with the registered nurse
- Review of records
- Observation during inspection of the premises
- Evaluation and feedback

Prior to inspection the following records were examined:

- Previous care inspection report
- Notifiable events submitted since the previous care inspection
- Written and verbal communication received since the previous care inspection

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- Staff training record
- Staff induction
- Dates of staff supervision and appraisal
- Staff recruitment file
- Staff competency assessment
- Selected policies and procedures
- Incident records
- Record of complaints

The inspector would like to thank the registered manager and named nurse for their support and co-operation throughout the inspection process.

8. The Inspection

8.1 Review of Requirements and Recommendations from Previous Inspection

Previous Inspection Recommendations		Validation of Compliance
Recommendation 1 Ref: Standard 1.12	It is recommended that the registered person carries out monthly monitoring of the quality of service provision and compiles a summary report with findings. The report should provide details of audit activity, audit findings and an action plan completed where deficits are identified for that particular month.	Met
	Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: The arrangements for the monthly monitoring visits and range of audits undertaken were explained. The arrangements were deemed satisfactory.	

<p>Recommendation 2</p> <p>Ref: Standard 1.1</p>	<p>The registered person should review the present management structure to identify clear lines of responsibility for the day to day operations of the service within Northern Ireland.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection The records viewed on the day of inspection confirmed that the management structure was clearly defined and identified the lines of responsibility.</p>	<p>Met</p>
<p>Recommendation 3</p> <p>Ref: Standard 2.1</p>	<p>The registered person should ensure that a policy for the absence of the registered manager is in place.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: The policy for the absence of a registered manager was available electronically and was found to be up to date at the time of inspection.</p>	<p>Met</p>
<p>Recommendation 4</p> <p>Ref: Standard 9.1 9.2.</p>	<p>The registered person should ensure that the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and safeguarding of children policy is in line with current legislation and consistent with regional protocols and procedures issued by Health and Social Services Boards and local Trusts.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: Revised policies for safeguarding of vulnerable adults and safeguarding children were submitted to RQIA. A review of the documents found them to be in keeping with the relevant legislation.</p>	<p>Met</p>
<p>Recommendation 5</p> <p>Ref: Standard 11.5</p>	<p>The registered person should ensure that the Service User Guide is updated to include details of the Northern Ireland Commissioner of Complaints.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: A revised service user guide was submitted to RQIA as requested. The review of the document found that it contained the relevant information.</p>	<p>Met</p>
<p>Recommendation 6</p> <p>Ref: Standard 8.6</p>	<p>The registered person should ensure that the Statement of Purpose is updated to include details of the Northern Ireland Commissioner of Complaints.</p> <p>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: A revised statement of purpose was submitted to RQIA as requested. The review of the document found that it contained the relevant information.</p>	<p>Met</p>

Recommendation 7 Ref: Standard 6.3	The registered manager should ensure that manual handling training is carried out for the nurse employed within Northern Ireland.	Met
	Action taken as confirmed during the inspection: Records examined on the day of inspection confirmed that the named nurse was in receipt of the required training.	

8.2 Theme 1: Nurse Training - The agency has procedures in place to ensure all nurses are appropriately trained and qualified for their roles.

Is Care Safe?

Ashfield Healthcare Ltd is a nursing agency based in England. The agency currently is primarily responsible as a service provider to the pharmaceutical industry, offering contracted services across Ireland and the UK. The service currently employs one full time nurse within Northern Ireland.

The nurse offers a range of services both in primary and secondary care clinics and within patients' homes. The service includes education and support for patients and other health care professionals on drug administration and audit services.

The agency has a dedicated training department and the standard operating procedure for the training of healthcare professionals, including nurses, was available for review. It was noted that the policy accurately reflected the nurse's role and responsibilities and that of managerial staff in regard to their professional development and training, as specified by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). In addition, the policy detailed mandatory training requirements and there was evidence that the policy had been revised, approved, signed and dated.

Records examined provided evidence that the training needs of individual nurses are identified and that the agency has systems in place to provide nurses with a wide range of training that included mandatory training and professional development. During discussions the named nurse outlined the training and information provided over the past year and related she was very satisfied with the training and support provided.

On the day of this inspection the administration systems were well organised and required records were maintained and easily retrieved for examination. Information examined indicated that each new nurse must complete an induction prior to any placement. The examination of the named nurse's training records provided evidence that the nurse had completed a structured orientation and induction programme.

Is Care Effective?

In discussion with the named nurse it was evident emphasis was placed on training. Records examined demonstrated that the training needs of the individual nurse were identified and systems were in place to meet identified training needs. Mandatory training was up to date.

Prior to employment, agency staff are required to complete the required mandatory training provided by the agency. It was noted from records viewed that the agency maintains a record of the content of training and the name and qualifications of the person providing the training.

There were suitable arrangements in place to ensure that the skills and expertise of the nurse are matched to the requirements of placements. The registered manager and nurse consulted reported that prior to any new contract the nurse is required to complete training in areas specific to the needs of individual service users. This information was confirmed in the nurse's individual training record and the electronic record held by the agency.

It was noted from records viewed that the agency maintains a record of the content of training, and the name and qualifications of the person providing the training. The agency provides staff with a handbook and it was noted that staff are required to discuss the contents of the handbook with the registered manager and sign a document to confirm that they have received a copy of the handbook.

Arrangements were in place to check that the nurse is registered with the NMC, and the nurse is required to produce evidence that their professional registration requirements are met and maintained on an ongoing basis. Policies also referred to the need for nurses to adhere to the NMC Code of Professional Conduct.

The organisation arranges appraisal meetings twice a year usually in December and June. An element of the appraisal meeting is to identify and plan training for the forthcoming year. Records viewed provided evidence of regular supervision. The named nurse confirmed she was very satisfied with the support she received from her line manager and reported she had regular contact both informally and formally.

Is Care Compassionate?

Arrangements are in place for the agency to obtain the views of service users. These arrangements also included obtaining service users views on the nurses provided and their competency. The registered manager discussed these arrangements and described the process for engaging with service users in order to obtain their feedback.

The agency analyses the outcome of feedback received, and if required an action plan is developed to address any identified improvements.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this theme.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
-------------------------------	----------	--------------------------------	----------

8.3 Theme 2: Vulnerable adults and children are protected from abuse.

Is Care Safe

Ashfield Healthcare Ltd has a general policy for safeguarding vulnerable adults within each region for which they provide services; policies are then further developed to include the local arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults.

The training record examined for a named nurse confirmed that procedures for protecting vulnerable adults, and safeguarding children and young people, are included in the induction programme for staff.

On induction each nurse is provided with a handbook that contains information on the action a nurse should take in the event of suspected, alleged or actual incidents of abuse being identified.

There is a written policy on "Whistleblowing" and procedures that outline the responsibility of staff in highlighting concerns or issues relating to poor practice.

The registered manager and the nurse employed in Northern Ireland were fully familiar with the reporting systems in the event of concerns regarding the protection of vulnerable adults, young people and children, and were fully aware of the records that are required to be maintained. There had been no reported incidents within the agency.

Is Care Effective?

The registered manager told the inspector of the range of safeguards the agency had implemented to ensure vulnerable adults, young people and children are protected from abuse.

The registered manager reported she was assured that prior to placement agency nurses were provided with sufficient information to ensure they took appropriate action in the event of a suspicion of, or actual abuse. The registered manager was confident with her role and responsibility regarding any investigation in the event of an allegation of abuse being made. She is also responsible for safeguarding training within the organisation and expressed that they had developed a good working relationship with all the relevant Health and Social Care Trusts.

Is Care Compassionate?

The registered manager confirmed that registered nurses are fully involved in the recruitment process. It was evident that the registered manager was committed to ensuring any nurse placed by the agency was competent and suitably skilled for the placements.

Records examined provided evidence that the agency had sound recruitment processes in place and appropriate pre-employment checks are completed.

The nurse employed had completed an induction that included training in all aspects of abuse and the protection of vulnerable adults, young people and children. Refresher training is provided for nurses on an annual basis. As previously stated, there was evidence that the agency has a programme of supervision in place for the nurse.

Discussion with the registered manager and the nurse, along with the review of training materials and the nurses' files, demonstrated that the agency promotes the core values of care and takes account of the minimum standards and regulations.

The agency provides the nurse and service users with an out of hours telephone number should they have a need to raise a concern or require guidance.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this theme.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
------------------------	---	-------------------------	---

Standard 11: There are arrangements in place to respond promptly to requests for private nursing care.

Is Care Safe?

The agency referral system for responding to requests to provide a service within a patient's own home was discussed, and the named nurse could clearly describe the arrangements in place. These arrangements corresponded with the agency procedures to attend any such requests. It was evident the referral system from the local health care trust to the agency was robust and transparent.

Is Care Effective?

Review of the statement of purpose and the service user guide evidenced up to date information regarding the agency. The complaints section in the statement of purpose and the service user guide had been revised and included the details of the NI Commissioner for Complaints.

Is Care Compassionate?

It was reported that generally the nurse visits the patient prior to discharge from hospital and all relevant information and training is provided. During home visits the nurse provides any additional information or support. The nurse outlined the work/support provided and it was evident that care was person centred and individualised to the programme each patient has agreed.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this theme.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
------------------------	---	-------------------------	---

Standard 12: Safe effective nursing care, that is based on continuous assessment, is planned and agreed with the patient, is accurately recorded in care plans and is regularly reviewed.

Is Care Safe?

A person-centred nursing care plan based on an initial assessment of the patient's care needs is implemented and re-assessed at each visit. The care plan is agreed and signed by the patient, and a copy of the record is held in the patient's home and maintained electronically with the named nurse.

Is Care Effective?

The agency has a system in place to ensure that they obtain consent from each patient prior to the commencement of any treatment. It was evident that arrangements were in place to ensure that patients were kept fully informed of issues relating to the care provided by the agency nurse.

Systems were in place to ensure that patients were provided with opportunities to make comments about the quality of care provided. These included the regular visits to the patients' homes by the nurse's line manager.

There was evidence that the agency had robust systems in place to provide ongoing clinical supervision, annual competency assessments and appraisals for the nurse employed by the agency.

Is Care Compassionate?

Patients are encouraged to participate in their care and have the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided.

The discussions held with the registered manger and the named nurse demonstrated that any outcomes of the prescribed treatment and care are clearly explained to patients, and there are ample opportunities to discuss the options available.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this theme.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
-------------------------------	----------	--------------------------------	----------

Standard 13: There are accurate and up to date case records for private patients who receive care in their own homes by nurses supplied by the nursing agency.

Is Care Safe?

The named nurse was fully familiar with agency guidelines relating to the management of record keeping and access to patient records. A review of a sample of case records found that entries were contemporaneous, dated, timed and signed, with the signature accompanied by the name and designation of the signatory.

Is Care Effective?

The nurse outlined the records maintained in the patients' homes, and explained that on each visit she recorded in the patients' records, and also maintained an electronic record. The named nurse was fully aware of the procedures regarding the transfer of the patients' records, and reported that they are returned to the consultant responsible for the treatment plan.

Is Care Compassionate?

The information provided to patients and discussions with the named nurse and registered

manager provided evidence that the patient was fully aware of the records maintained and how they would be retained.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this standard.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
------------------------	---	-------------------------	---

Standard 14: Consent to treatment and care is obtained from private patients who receive care in their own home.

Is Care Safe?

The agency has a clear policy and procedure in place for obtaining consent to treatment and care that reflected the NMC Code of Professional Conduct and DHSSPS guidelines.

The named nurse explained that prior to any treatment the patient has also consented to be involved in the treatment plan.

The named nurse is available during home visits to explain all procedures and answer any questions. The named nurse and the patient both sign the electronic consent record.

Is Care Effective?

It was evident from the review of records and discussions with the named nurse that the patient is provided with information regarding their treatment, possible side effects and expected outcomes prior to obtaining consent.

Is Care Compassionate?

Discussions with the named nurse found her to be professional and fully conversant with the different aspects of obtaining consent. It was evident that the named nurse placed emphasis on ensuring that patients and their representatives were fully informed of the implications of the treatment and any options available to them.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this standard.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
------------------------	---	-------------------------	---

Standard 15: There are arrangements in place to ensure that agency nurses manage medicines safely and securely in private patients' own homes.

Is Care Safe?

Nurses are issued with relevant information regarding the medication to be administered and any specific treatment protocols relating to the medication. An information pack is also included in the patient support programme. In discussions it was confirmed that compliance with the

medications policy and procedure and the specific treatment administration is checked during supervision/field visits.

Is Care Effective?

The agency has policies and procedures in place for the management and administration of medication in the patient's own home. The policy and procedures covers all activities concerned with the management of medicines for private patients.

Is Care Compassionate?


The named nurse was fully aware and could confidently discuss the records to be maintained regarding the administration of medicines. The procedures for reporting any medication incidents that occur in private patients' homes were discussed, and the named nurse was familiar with the process to follow in the event of such an occurrence.

Areas for Improvement

There were no areas for improvement identified within this standard.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
-------------------------------	----------	--------------------------------	----------

No requirements or recommendations resulted from this inspection.

I agree with the content of the report.			
Registered Manager	Sally Woolston	Date Completed	21 st April
Registered Person	Ian Rubin	Date Approved	21 st April
RQIA Inspector Assessing Response		Date Approved	03/05/16

Please provide any additional comments or observations you may wish to make below:

Please ensure this document is completed in full and returned to agencies.team@rqia.org.uk from the authorised email address

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and weaknesses that exist in the service. The findings set out are only those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not absolve the registered person/manager from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with minimum standards and regulations.