

A24 Group Limited trading as Ambition 24 Hours. The Nursing Services of the UK. The British Nursing Association (BNA). Mayfair Specialist Nursing Nurse Agency

92-96 Lind Road
Sutton
SM1 4PL

Telephone: 0207 112 4549

Type of inspection: Announced
Inspection completed on: 26 April 2018

Service provided by:
A24 Group Limited

Service provider number:
SP2010010980

Care service number:
CS2010251496

About the service

A24 Group Limited trading as Ambition 24 Hours, The Nursing Services of the UK, the British Nursing Association (BNA), Mayfair Specialist Nursing provides a nurse agency supplying registered nurses to individuals, organisations and other registered care providers throughout Scotland.

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 3 April 2011. A24 operate from premises in Sutton in Surrey. Their booking centre and quality directorate operate from South Africa. The manager of the service is a registered nurse. At the time of the inspection the service employed around 80 registered nurses and 20 carers working throughout Scotland. The care staff allocated to service do not fall within the remit of the Care Inspectorate and were not included in this inspection.

The provider's website (ambition24hours.co.uk) states: "We specialise in meeting the needs of healthcare providers at very short notice, 24-7."

Their statement of purpose includes that the service will: "Deliver a fast first class service to all our clients" and "Ensure that all nurses deliver services to the standards laid out by the organisation and its regulatory bodies".

What people told us

This service is a nurse agency. The people who use the service are registered care home providers where nurses are placed. We refer to the care home providers as clients.

As part of the inspection process we received feedback from clients by telephone. Clients we talked to said the service was reliable and could respond to their needs at short notice:

"A pleasant person always comes back to us quickly"
"they are reliable".

We also talked to registered nurse who work for the service. They told us A24 is good company to work for. They recognised training opportunities as important and used elearning and face-to-face events.

Self assessment

We did not request a self assessment before the inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of Information	4 - Good
Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of information

Findings from the inspection

An electronic system helped the service to match the right nurse to the clients needs. Information held included nurses registration details, training and experience. This information helped to ensure that people who live in care services experience care from nurses with the right knowledge and skills.

Some clients told us about communicating with a named contact at the agency. Clients valued this approach because it assured them that the service knows them and was listening to their needs.

Clients and staff told us the on-line information was a useful way to meet their needs. A website provided an initial point of contact and on-going information for both clients and staff. The website included contact details, frequently asked questions, policies and procedures.

Clients and staff told us they can contact the service by email or phone, over a 24 hour period. The agency developed an app (application) to support nurses to interact more efficiently with the service. Agency staff told us this was an easy way for them to keep up-to-date with their shift plans. It also ensured instant access to information about work and availability. Clients benefit from this approach because it helped ensure that their needs were addressed promptly. The Registered Manager was aware of the need to manage information in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

We discussed ways to improve the quality of information on the website. For example we were unable to read the most recent Care Inspectorate report and information about addresses and locations needs updated. Some policies also need updated. (See recommendation one).

Some agency staff said they can experience miscommunication or difficulties contacting the service. It would be helpful if staff could contact the Registered Manager directly rather than via the South African booking centre. The Registered Manager will discuss this with staff to find a resolution.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. People who use the service should have access to up-to-date information to enable them to make informed choices and decisions.

The National Health and Social Care Standard, 4.27: I experience high quality of care and support because people have the necessary information and resources.

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Some clients told us about regular shifts which agency nurses provide. This helped ensure that people who live in care services experience continuity of care from agency nurses they know and who know them.

Regular agency nurses were valued by clients who want to provide people with continuity of care. One said: We use the same nurse for continuity. She is great. We have no problems with her at all".

Clients were positive about the quality of support from nurses placed in their services. One said: "They are really good. They always cover. The nurses are good".

Clients said the booking systems, although based in South Africa, was easy to use electronically or by phone: "Someone always phones back".

We asked eight staff about their experience of delivering care as agency workers. Staff were generally positive and felt well supported by the service. For example, training ensured that people who live in care services were supported by agency nurses with the right knowledge and skills.

Training is key to help agency staff improve outcomes when delivering care to people. We found that the training and test about adult support and protection was not relevant to Scottish legislation. This did not ensure that staff knowledge was current and care delivered safely (See recommendation one).

Some policies developed to guide staff about how best to support people need updated in line with good practice. For example the policy about challenging behaviour should focus on stress and distress reactions (See recommendation two).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. Adult Support and Protection training needs to be revised and delivered in line with Scottish legislation to meet the needs of clients and staff.

The National Health and Social Care Standards, 3.20 and 3.21: I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and respond to signs of deterioration in my health and wellbeing.

2. The Registered Manager should develop a policy about managing stress and distressed reactions in line with good practice.

The National Health and Social Care Standard, 4.11: I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Clients held a positive view of the quality of nurses placed with them by the nurse agency. They said it was helpful that nurses were suitable and matched to their needs. One said: "We have used them. We have no issues with staff provided. They have covered at short notice".

The use of safer recruitment principles provided clients with assurance that agency staff were suitable to provide vulnerable people with safe care and support. Recruitment practices reflect good practice, were documented clearly and logically. All relevant checks were carried out and new staff completed a Protection of Vulnerable Groups check to ensure the safety and wellbeing to vulnerable people. We discussed the need to ensure information is only stored for as long as it is necessary (See recommendation one).

Nurses were registered with the appropriate body, the NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council). This ensured that the clients were operating in-line with regulations and staff were qualified to carry out their roles. The service demonstrated that checks were completed to ensure nurse were legally able and safe to practice. An electronic system ensured nurses could not be placed in services if they were not up-to-date with mandatory training. The electronic system held an audit of registration details for nurses. This included revalidation details. Two nurses told us they were offered assistance with the requirement to revalidate.

We were told by clients that if there were any issues with placed nurses these were addressed effectively by the service. We found the agency received only a few complaints and these were properly addressed to ensure client satisfaction. However the complaint policy did not include information about the Care Inspectorate, information which people may require (See recommendations two). We discussed the need to notify the Care Inspectorate about significant incidents and signposted the Registered Manager to the Duty of Candour factsheets for staff working in health and social care in Scotland.

Staff supervision was happening for registered nurses who provide care at home. There was a need to develop a more structured approach to ensure that all staff receive regular supervision. This would help to ensure that the quality of staff performance can be demonstrated and is in line with NMC (Nursing and Midwifery Council) code (See recommendation three).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 3

1. The manager should ensure Disclosure Scotland information is only stored for as long as it is necessary. The providers' policy about storage and destruction of records need to reflect this.

The National Health and Social Care Standard, 4.11: I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.

2. The complaint policy needs revised and updated to include information about the Care Inspectorate.

The National Health and Social Care Standard, 4.20: I know how, and can be helped, to make a complaint or raise a concern about my care and support.

3. All registered nurses should have access to regular supervision so that the quality of their performance can be demonstrated.

The National Health and Social Care Standard, 3.14: I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent, and skilled re able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes.

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Clients were satisfied with management and leadership of the service. They found the service accessible and were positive about systems to ensure nurses met their needs.

The agency had electronic systems which ensure nurses were suitably placed and matched the needs of clients. This included access to relevant information in relation to staff including their identity and recruitment checks, qualifications, training compliance and NMC registration details. We discussed the need to manage information in line with General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

We saw records of e-learning. However the service lacked a system for checking the quality of staff training in practice. For example it was evident that ASP (Adult Support and Protection) training had not influenced practice. The reliance on self and e-learning could lead to a decline in practice standards.

We discussed the need to ensure nurses supplied to care homes were practicing at an appropriate level of knowledge about living with dementia. This would reassure people living with dementia, and their families, that agency nurses know how to care and support them well. We signposted the service to the Promoting Excellence in dementia care resource available at www.sssc.uk.com/workforce-developemt/supporting-your-development/promoting-excellence-in-dementia-care.

There was a need to improve the approach to quality assurance. Although there were ways to gain stakeholder feedback, clients told us they were not always asked to comment. To reflect the principles of the Health and Social Care Standards, the service needs to hear views of clients. Feedback should not be undermined by a lack of follow-up (See recommendation one). We want the service to develop an improvement plan to demonstrate continuous improvement as part of their quality assurance framework.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The Registered Manager should ensure that quality assurance is carried out effectively and reflect service developments and continuous improvements. Stakeholders should be meaningfully involved in improving the service.

The National Health and Social Care Standard, 4.19: I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes

Grade: 3 - adequate

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
19 Mar 2015	Announced (short notice)	Information 4 - Good Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
28 Mar 2012	Announced	Information 3 - Adequate Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate

To find out more

This inspection report is published by the Care Inspectorate. You can download this report and others from our website.

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and help services to improve. We also investigate complaints about care services and can take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

You can also read more about our work online at www.careinspectorate.com

Contact us

Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

enquiries@careinspectorate.com

0345 600 9527

Find us on Facebook

Twitter: @careinspect

Other languages and formats

This report is available in other languages and formats on request.

Tha am foillseachadh seo ri fhaighinn ann an cruthannan is cànan eile ma nithear iartras.

অনুরোধসাপেক্ষে এই প্রকাশনাটি অন্য ফরম্যাট এবং অন্যান্য ভাষায় পাওয়া যায়।

یہ اشاعت درخواست کرنے پر دیگر شکلوں اور دیگر زبانوں میں فراہم کی جاسکتی ہے۔

ਬੇਨਤੀ 'ਤੇ ਇਹ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਨ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰਨਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਹੈ।

هذه الوثيقة متوفرة بلغات ونماذج أخرى عند الطلب

本出版品有其他格式和其他語言備索。

Na życzenie niniejsza publikacja dostępna jest także w innych formatach oraz językach.