

Medacs Healthcare Nurse Agency

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 February 2024

Service provided by:
Medacs Healthcare plc

Service provider number:
SP2015012593

Service no:
CS2015341577

About the service

Medacs Healthcare operates a nurse agency service from an office based in the centre of Glasgow. The service provides registered nurses to the NHS across Scotland. The provider is Medacs Healthcare plc.

At the time of the inspection, Medacs Healthcare was supplying registered nurses to NHS health boards.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 14, 19 and 20 February 2024. Feedback was provided on 21 February 2024. One inspector from the Care Inspectorate carried out the inspection.

To prepare for this inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered throughout the inspection year.

To inform our evaluation we:

- spoke with and contacted six NHS health boards who were using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Professional and skilled nursing staff were supplied to deliver care.
- Additional recruitment checks were undertaken to ensure staff were recruited safely and continued to remain suitable for working with people.
- The agency had a strong focus on providing the right staff for the services being supported.
- There was a culture of continuous improvement.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership and staffing?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in the service delivery and support provided, which supported positive outcomes for people.

The organisation had a vision in line with providing high quality care and support which helped to protect people from harm and respected people's rights and choices. The agency supplied registered nurses to health boards across Scotland. Detailed information was sent to all prospective clients, and information was also readily available on the agency's recently updated website. This ensured health boards knew what would be possible if they used the agency.

People were well-informed about the service they had purchased, as this was included within the service agreement. There was ongoing discussion between the health boards and the agency to ensure that staff with the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding were matched to their needs. As a result, services benefited from knowing that the agency would supply nurses to meet their and their service users' requirements. An NHS manager confirmed this when they said, "They respond to our needs particularly with mental health requirements and provide staff on a block booking basis. We have no complaints regarding attitude, behaviour, clinical ability or compliance with our policies and procedures."

People were confident that nurses coming to support them were well trained and understood their roles and responsibilities. Nurses took time to listen and understand the needs of the NHS service and how best to support people. Where issues had arisen, this was discussed, and agreements had been reached, for example, around people and the nurses' expectations of the induction to a new NHS service. People shared with us that nurses were "very professional". Consequently, people who were cared for by the agency nurses were respected and valued.

Comprehensive and up-to-date policies and procedures were readily available to agency staff. Staff were frequently reminded of changes and updates to the policies by the management. As a result, staff had all the relevant best practice information available.

Communication with the agency was very good. People said, "They are available 24 hrs" and "They are amazing, supportive and reassuring". The office team was readily available to discuss any concerns or issues. Therefore, people felt comfortable to raise any issues with the agency and felt confident their feedback would be acted upon when required.

How good is our leadership and staffing?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good. We found significant strengths in the service delivery and support provided, which supported positive outcomes for people.

Staff were recruited safely. The agency followed national safer recruitment guidance. The process of recruitment was well organised and documented so that core elements of the procedure were followed consistently. Additional recruitment checks were in place, such as requesting up to date references from either the staff member's main employer or from their most frequent placement, and an occupational fitness to work assessment, on an annual basis. This meant people using the service could be confident that staff not only had been recruited safely but that staff remained suitable for working with people, whilst keeping them safe from harm and risks.

The registered manager demonstrated a clear understanding about what was working well and what improvements were needed. They ensured that the outcomes of people who were using the service and the support for nurses they deployed were central to the systems and people running the day to day service. There was a wide-ranging quality assurance process in place. Staff spoke with the NHS health boards on a frequent basis. Some of the feedback was informal, but some clients had chosen to give formal feedback directly to the agency by email. The feedback was positive both about the service and quality of staff. Formal feedback was requested through the agency's annual feedback questionnaires issued to both clients and staff.

There was a detailed complaints procedure that enabled concerns to be raised formally and informally. This had been shared with staff and NHS boards. People said that they were comfortable raising concerns with the service and that these concerns would be addressed. As a result, people could be confident that their feedback would be listened to and actioned where required to improve the service delivered. An improvement plan was in place. Having an improvement plan supported a culture of continuous improvement within the service.

Systems and processes to support and develop staff were in place. All staff had access to the staff page on the agency's website and other social media platforms. This detailed their role and responsibilities of working for the agency. Formal and informal processes were being used to support staff, through regular one-to-one meetings and appraisals. For staff who chose to work additional hours, the management should ensure this is formally discussed regularly. This should ensure the staff member remains fit to undertake their roles effectively. Staff said that they felt well supported and additional training needs were discussed. This assisted in assuring staff remained competent, skilled, and supported to undertake their role.

The agency had their own training department and utilised specialist courses available through the NHS. There was a mix of online and face-to-face training taking place. Training was relevant to the nurses' role and mandatory training was completed before staff began work. This contributed to people who use the agency being confident that staff have the right skills and knowledge to support them safely.

Complaints

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

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 People's rights are promoted and respected	5 - Very Good
1.2 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership and staffing?	5 - Very Good
2.1 Safer recruitment principles, vision and values positively inform practice	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good
2.3 Staff have the right skills and are confident and competent	5 - Very Good

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