

A1 Care & Professional Services (Nursing and Care Agency) Nurse Agency

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Type of inspection:
Announced

Completed on:
29 May 2024

Service provided by:
Bryan Chitemere trading as A1 Care &
Professional Services

Service provider number:
SP2014012372

Service no:
CS2014332353

About the service

A1 Care & Professional Services (A1) was a well established but small nurse agency with little evidence of recent activity. The Nurse Agency was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 29 September 2015 to provide nurses to registered care homes in the Lothians, Fife, Perthshire, Stirling, and Dundee/Angus.

A1 operates from an office base in Fife and is not currently registered to provide nurses to private individuals in their own homes. The provider must ensure that:

- Any staff member responsible for placing nurses must be a registered nurse with the appropriate qualifications, skills and experience.
- A registered nurse must be 'on-call' whenever the service is in operation.
- The service must ensure that all nurses placed by them are registered with the relevant professional body, and on the relevant parts of the register in respect of the work they are to be carrying out.

The registered manager and service provider, Bryan Chitemere was available to support the business of inspection.

About the inspection

This was an announced inspection which took place on 27 May 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

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

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with five staff and management
- spoke with one care home staff member
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- This was a small well established service.
- There were sufficient systems in place to support the day to day business.
- Providing evidence of compliance with regulatory responsibilities was an area for 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?	4 - Good
How good is our leadership and staffing?	3 - Adequate

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

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

At the time of this inspection A1 was a well established but small nurse agency with little evidence of recent activity. We evaluated this key question overall, as good based upon the size of the team and short lines of communication which meant the service could be responsive to the requests from services and the needs of people using the services.

We were told that, the nurses had been reliable and there was a process in place to cover late call-offs by staff. Services were, therefore, less likely to be left short-staffed and able to meet people's care needs.

The service aims and objectives clearly reflected the principles behind the Health and Social Care Standards. Sufficient policies and procedures were in place and there was evidence of regular review. As a result people could be confident they should experience care and support based on relevant guidance.

The nurses said that where they needed advice about people's care needs, they could obtain this from the services they were sent to. They also said that the management team were easily accessible for advice and support if needed.

One member of the management team was a registered nurse. They had the necessary knowledge and experience to communicate with services and identify suitable nursing staff for placements. This helped ensure that the allocation of nursing staff was appropriate to the care setting.

The nurses told us they felt the training offered was good, which resulted in them having confidence in their practice supporting the best outcomes for the people in the homes they supported. They confirmed their e learning included essential practice areas such as medication management and infection prevention and control. The nurses were well informed about their responsibilities under their professional code of conduct. As a result people could be confident they should experience safe nursing care.

How good is our leadership and staffing?

3 - Adequate

We found the service was performing at an adequate level. Where there were some strengths, it is important the provider builds on these strengths, to increase the likelihood of people experiencing positive experiences and outcomes.

At the time of this inspection A1 was a well established but small nurse agency with little evidence of recent activity.

A set of policies and procedures, were in place to guide and support nurses. The service is small and lines of communication short which meant there were strong links between management and nurses. The provider did have some feedback from clients and systems were in place to deal with any concerns. At the time of inspection, no formal complaints had been raised with the agency for several months.

A service improvement plan was in place but the provider described changes in demand for their agency nurses which was limiting development of the nurse agency. They were also in the process of transferring records from paper to electronic which while presenting an opportunity for ensuring policies were reviewed and staff had completed on line training, it meant it was difficult to examine systems for the deployment of nurses and measure improvement. There was some evidence of more formal systems that could be reinstated should the service expand and management had to coordinate a bigger service once more. **See area for improvement 1.**

Since the last inspection, there had been few significant events that would have required notification to the Care Inspectorate. Discussion with the service provider identified that although records of accidents, incidents and complaints were maintained there had been some slippage in submitting notifications. Notification of significant events is an important factor in providing for the health, welfare, and safety of people using care services. **See requirement 1.**

At the time of our inspection, A1 had two nurses available for deployment. They provided positive feedback about working for the nurse agency and the training and support provided.

We received positive comments from a member of staff from one service about the nurses supplied by the agency. The nurses had been reliable which meant services were less likely to be left short-staffed and were able to meet people's care needs.

Safer recruitment practices were in place, which helped ensure that nurses were fit to carry out the duties they were employed for. Checks on NMC registration were carried out before starting employment. These were checked regularly thereafter. An appropriate induction programme was in place to support new nurses. This could also be used to support nurses should they return to the agency after a spell of absence. Ongoing online training was up to date. Supervision and appraisal sessions were usually carried out by telephone. However, face-to-face sessions could be arranged, where necessary. As a result, people using the service were protected and staff training needs could be identified.

Requirements

1. By 26 August the provider must ensure that all significant events, as detailed in the Care Inspectorate's document 'Records that all services (except childminders) must keep and guidance on notification reporting', are notified to the Care Inspectorate.

This is in order to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulation 2011, (SSI 2011/210) Regulation 4 - Welfare of Service Users.

Areas for improvement

1.
In order for management systems to provide assurance, the provider should ensure the transfer of records from paper to electronic provides evidence of formal recording systems in place to manage and support the delivery of a high-quality service and improvements.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement, with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes.' (HSCS 4.19)

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?	4 - Good
1.1 People's rights are promoted and respected	4 - Good
1.2 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	4 - Good
How good is our leadership and staffing?	3 - Adequate
2.1 Safer recruitment principles, vision and values positively inform practice	4 - Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	3 - Adequate
2.3 Staff have the right skills and are confident and competent	4 - Good

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