

ScotForce Healthcare Nurse Agency

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
21 January 2025

Service provided by:
ScotForce Recruitment Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2015012634

Service no:
CS2015343413

About the service

ScotForce Healthcare has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 2016. It is registered to supply nurses to registered care services, hospitals, and health care services. The service's mission is to "positively impact the lives of others through the meaningful work we do" and their philosophy of care states "we care for our people so they will care for others".

At the time of this virtual inspection, the service was providing nursing personnel to care homes in Tayside, Fife, Angus, West Lothian, Stirlingshire, Glasgow, North and South Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, and Renfrewshire. The service has office bases in Perth and Glasgow.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place between 15 January and 20 January 2025. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

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

To inform our evaluations we:

- spoke with 10 care home managers who use the service
- spoke with five members of staff and the management team
- reviewed documents

Key messages

- Staff felt well supported, confident and competent in their roles
- The leadership team and staff were passionate about delivering consistently high-quality care
- The service was committed to providing the right staff for the people they supported
- People felt confident that their feedback was listened to and actioned
- A culture of continuous improvement existed within the service and the leadership team was responsive to suggestions we made

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

Care home managers we spoke to were very satisfied with the service they received from ScotForce Healthcare and spoke positively about the quality of care provided by the nursing staff who they described as "committed" and "skilled." They highlighted that they benefited from effective communication with the service and that the whole team was helpful and friendly. One care home manager stated, "the admin team try very hard to get us our cover especially at short notice" and another remarked that the service was "very approachable and supportive."

The service had a range of comprehensive policies and procedures in place. Whilst there was guidance for staff about restrictive practice involving physical interventions, there also needed to be clear guidance relating to restrictions of people's independence, choice, and control. The management team agreed to ensure that this information was cascaded to the staff team with immediate effect to ensure that restrictions were kept to a minimum and carried out appropriately.

The service had Adult and Child protection policies which contained detailed procedures for staff to follow should they suspect that a person was at risk of harm and staff we spoke to understood their responsibilities in relation to protecting people from harm. We discussed with the management team that consideration could be given to ensuring these policies reflected current terminology relating to harm, were succinct and included contact details for all relevant Health and Social Care Partnerships. The management team advised that they were in the process of updating all policies and that the protection policies would be prioritised.

Clear and concise information was provided to clients via a comprehensive information pack which included details of the agency, its aims and objectives and detailed how people could raise concerns or complaints. Clients were well informed about the service they were purchasing and many care home managers we spoke with highlighted the helpfulness of the service's App which allowed them to arrange their staffing requirements easily. They told us that they received detailed information from the service and that 'staff profiles' were always fully completed. Care home managers had the right information to allow them to make informed decisions about using the service and were assured that the agency staff being deployed were suitable to meet the needs of those they were supporting.

In advance of shifts, agency nurses told us they received detailed handover sheets about people's care requirements which "asked all the right questions." This information ensured that people's support arrangements were right and in accordance with their needs and wishes.

The service matched staff to services wherever possible using client and staff profiles. We heard from care home managers that they often requested continuity of agency nurses and that wherever possible, the service would ensure this happened. One care home manager told us how the service "bent over backwards" to ensure staffing continuity. People, therefore, knew who would be supporting them, and could build trusting relationships with nurses with whom they were familiar. It also meant that agency nurses were familiar with people's care needs and wishes and were able to quickly respond to any changes in their presentation.

The service sought regular feedback from clients and agency nurses and used this information to match staff to services, monitor staff competence, identify any learning gaps or issues and to inform improvements in service delivery. The service strove to provide consistently high-quality care and saw effective

communication with the clients and their staff as essential to ensure that the service they delivered met with client expectations. Care home managers and staff told us that their views were encouraged and that they felt listened to and valued by the service. Where issues or concerns were raised, the service dealt with these thoroughly, without delay and in a sensitive manner. They engaged with people positively to resolve issues and used learning from these to make improvements to the service they provided.

The service had policies and training in place in relation to infection prevention and control (IPC) but had recognised in their improvement plan, that this was an area they needed to enhance further and had introduced a new lead for IPC and had plans in place to improve communication with their staff team in relation to current best practice guidance to ensure that the people they supported remained safe and protected from infection risks.

How good is our leadership and staffing?

5 - Very Good

The service had a robust recruitment procedure in place which was well organised and in line with safer recruitment guidance. Staff did not start work until all pre-employment checks and mandatory induction training had been completed and they had been assessed as competent. This meant people using the service could be confident that agency nurses supporting them had been recruited safely.

Staff demonstrated that they understood the vision of ScotForce Healthcare and that they understood their job role and expectations well. Several staff members commented on the high standards expected of them by the service. Whilst Health and Social Care Standards had influenced the ethos of the service, specific reference to these standards would have been helpful to focus staff's attention in further promoting people's rights and ensuring positive outcomes for them. The leadership team agreed to implement this information into induction training, policy documents and their improvement plan going forward.

There were comprehensive quality assurance processes in place which supported effective leadership oversight across the service. The service gathered regular feedback from clients and staff; used self-evaluation tools and had completed monthly quality assurance audits which meant they were able to quickly identify and resolve issues. Leaders demonstrated a clear understanding of what was working well and could identify areas for improvement. We discussed with the leadership team that feedback and lessons learned could be included within their improvement plan to demonstrate how this has influenced the direction of the service which they agreed to incorporate.

The Care Inspectorate had not been notified of some incidents and accidents that were notifiable. The leadership team immediately developed a system which would ensure that all notifiable incidents would be reported in the future.

The staff we spoke to were happy in their jobs and one stated the service was "very caring, very friendly and so approachable". Staff felt well supported by the leadership team. Care home managers and staff felt able to raise concerns and were confident that the leadership team would address any issues quickly. Staff told us that the leadership team welcomed their questions and that the service was "open to change" and a care home manager recalled how anything raised had been dealt with "swiftly and professionally". When things had gone wrong, leaders offered genuine apologies and took action to learn from mistakes and learning was shared. A culture of continuous improvement existed within the service and the experiences of people using the service influenced change.

Care home managers told us that they were confident that agency nurses were well trained, skilled and that they understood their roles and responsibilities. They commented that the agency nurses were "absolutely brilliant," "polite" and "professional in their approach" and "staff are confident and competent in what they are doing". Agency nurses told us that the service had "high standards" and advised that all staff were expected to adhere to these standards. All agency nurses we spoke to were confident in their role and demonstrated an enthusiasm and commitment to the people they cared for, and one nurse told us "I will do anything that is needed of me". People could be confident that competent and compassionate nurses would deliver their care.

Staff told us that induction was "supportive" and we saw from training records and heard from staff, that in addition to mandatory training, the service offered a wealth of learning and development opportunities. The service had in-house training resources but also commissioned bespoke courses when required to meet the

needs of the people they were supporting and we heard from care home managers that on occasions, they would also be invited by the service to attend training they had organised. The service had effective systems in place to maintain oversight of nurses' professional registrations and staff we spoke to were grateful for the arrangements that were in place to support revalidations. The service's commitment to continuous development ensured staff remained skilled.

Agency nurses were supervised by a clinical lead and had access to clinical support through an on-call support out with normal office hours. One staff member told us "there is always someone there for me."

The service gathered feedback from clients and nursing staff in relation to their experiences which informed any actions required in relation to staff practice and service delivery. Nursing staff also received annual supervision and more regularly if required. We discussed with the leadership team that leaders should have a robust and clear understanding of their role in monitoring practice and standards of care to enable them to identify, direct and support improvement activities. The leadership team immediately agreed to introduce three monthly supervisions for all nurses and undertake regular observations of practice so that they could be assured that the nursing staff continued to be confident and competent in their roles and responsibilities.

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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