

H1 Healthcare Nurse Agency

H1 Healthcare Group Ltd
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Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
5 September 2023

Service provided by:
H1 Healthcare Solutions Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2004005646

Service no:
CS2009237045

About the service

H1 Healthcare is owned and managed by H1 Healthcare Solutions Ltd. H1 Healthcare may supply or introduce Registered Nurses to the following categories of persons who use the service: Older People, people with learning disabilities, people with physical impairment, people with mental health problems, care homes and private clinics and hospitals.

The company is based in Glasgow but operates nationally and supplies both Registered Nurses and care workers to registered care services throughout Scotland and the NHS.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place between 28 August and 6 September 2023. One inspector carried out the inspection.

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 evaluation we:

- spoke with and made contact with five managers of care homes and the NHS who were using the service
- spoke with staff and management
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Professional and skilled nursing staff were supplied to deliver care.
- Detailed 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.
- Nurses felt well supported, confident and competent in their roles.
- The detailed quality assurance system prompted 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 was committed to providing high quality care and support, which helped to provide a solution for clinical staffing shortfalls. The agency supplied Registered Nurses to care homes and the NHS throughout Scotland. Detailed information was readily available to all prospective clients, on the agency's website. This ensured care homes and the NHS knew what would be possible if they used the agency.

People were well-informed about the service they had purchased. A detailed signed service agreement and client visit assessments were in place. Not all client visits assessments were up to date. The manager had identified this as an ongoing development. This will ensure that the agency is fully aware of any potential risks or hazards that their staff may encounter on placement. There were ongoing discussions between the people requesting staff and the agency, to ensure that staff with the appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding were matched to their specific needs.

People requesting staff had ready access to the Registered Nurses profile via the agency's electronic management system. This included information on their skills, knowledge and competencies. As a result, services benefitted from knowing that the agency would supply nurses to meet their service users' requirements and provide continuity of care. A care home manager said, "the agency will do their best to provide the same nurses to promote continuity. One particular nurse was excellent, she would do her very best to promote positive outcomes for people." There was a concern raised around shifts being double booked and last-minute cancellations. The care home managers understood why these situations occurred but found them frustrating.

People were confident that nurses coming to support them were well trained and understood their roles and responsibilities. A comprehensive training program was in place. Staff completed their core training before commencing placement. Training was monitored and updated annually. The management team had high expectations of their staff. This included staff displaying professional values and ensuring their staff worked as part of the client's team. Where issues had arisen this was discussed and prompt action was taken, either through the agency's formal processes or informally through coaching conversations. The agency engaged positively with organisations to resolve any issues and used learning from these to make improvements to the service they delivered. People shared with us that, "the staff they provide can be hit or miss". However, "concerns were investigated and addressed by the agency". As a consequence, 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 both agency staff and clients via the agency's electronic management system. Staff were frequently reminded of changes and updates to the policies and procedures by the management team. As a result, staff had all the relevant best practice information and guidance available to support their practice.

Communication with the agency was very good. The manager and allocation/sales team had developed good working relationships with services and their staff. People said that when they deal directly with the agency their queries are responded to quickly and efficiently. The manager was readily available to discuss any concerns or issues no matter how small. As a consequence, people felt comfortable to raise any issues with the agency and felt confident their feedback would be acted upon.

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 being recruited safely. The agency followed national Safer Recruitment guidance. The process of recruitment was well organised and documented so that all the elements of the procedure were followed consistently and audited on an ongoing basis. Detailed policies and processes were in place to ensure that they fully monitor and comply with any restrictions placed on staff as part of their right to work in the UK. This meant people using the service could be confident that staff had been recruited safely and were working within their requirements, whilst keeping them safe from harm and risks.

The management team demonstrated a clear understanding about what was working well and what improvements were needed. They ensured that the outcomes for people who were using the service and the support for nurses they deployed remained central to the systems. There was a wide-ranging quality assurance process in place, supported by the agency's electronic management system. There was a mixture of formal and informal feedback obtained on a regular basis on the performance and quality of the agency and the staff they supply.

The agency's electronic management system also enabled people to give instant feedback on either the agency or individual staff, via a star rating system. A star rating of less than three was followed up by a phone call to the service. The detailed complaints procedure enabled concerns to be raised formally and informally. This had been shared with staff, care homes and the NHS. People said that they were comfortable raising concerns with the service and that these concerns would be addressed.

The agency identified that there had been an increase in medication errors. All Registered Nurses took part in an upscaling interactive medication training session. As a result, the number of medication errors have reduced significantly. Medication errors were very well managed which meant the risk to people had reduced. People could be confident that their feedback would be listened to and actioned where required, to improve the service delivered.

A detailed improvement plan was in place. This plan was available to all staff, staff were given the opportunity to contribute or comment on the improvement plan. There was a culture of continuous improvement clearly evident at this inspection. We found learning from complaints and incidents was central to the provider's quality assurance processes and informed a dynamic approach to quality improvement in all areas including medication management.

Systems and processes to support and develop staff were in place. All staff had access to the agency's electronic management system. This detailed their role and responsibilities of working for the agency and information to support their practice and placements. Formal and informal processes were being used to support staff, through one-to-one meetings and appraisals. For staff who chose to work additional hours, the management ensured this was formally discussed regularly as part of the appraisal process. This ensured the staff member remained fit to undertake their roles effectively.

Issues regarding staff practice were addressed through monitoring of practice, competency checks and increased meetings with both staff and the client. Staff said that they felt well supported and additional training and development needs were identified and addressed. For example, a number of staff had identified that additional training in intravenous (IV) and cannulation would be beneficial. A training program was developed and made available to the Registered Nurses. This assisted in assuring staff remained competent, skilled and supported to undertake their role. They also benefitted from direct feedback from people using the service as part of their appraisal. This in turn could promote a positive culture of care in the services in which they were deployed.

The agency had their own training department and utilised specialist courses available, via the NHS. There was a mix of online and face to face training taking place. Part of this training included monitoring and/or assessing skills and competencies. 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.

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The registered manager should receive supervision in line with good practice.

National Care Standards for Nursing Agencies: Standard 4 - Management and Staffing Arrangements

This area for improvement was made on 31 October 2016.

Action taken since then

This area for improvement was met. See 'How good is our leadership and staffing?'

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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