



Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales

Care Standards Act 2000

Inspection Report

Andover Nursing Services Limited

Aberdare

Type of Inspection – Baseline

Date of inspection – Wednesday, 9 September 2015

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Summary

About the service

Andover Nursing Services Ltd. is registered with Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) to operate as a nursing agency from its office base in Aberdare. It has a database of registered nurses and healthcare support workers who have a wide range of qualifications, experience and expertise. The agency is contracted into NHS Trusts and Local Health Boards via the All Wales Agency Contract and also serves several independent providers.

The registered manager is Dawn Chivers who also undertakes the role of the agency's Operations Director. The company has a nominated responsible individual (RI) who oversees the day-to-day strategic management of the agency and fulfils the role of Managing Director.

What type of inspection was carried out?

We (CSSIW) visited the agency on an unannounced basis on 9 September 2015. We carried out a baseline (full) inspection which in the main considered the quality of staffing and the quality of leadership and management of the service. We used the following sources of information to formulate our report:

- analysis of information held by CSSIW about the service since the last inspection
- conversations with the registered manager and RI
- examination of four staff personnel files including training and supervision records
- telephone conversations following our visit with two staff members and two purchasers of the service
- examination of the agency's Service User Guide, quality assurance documentation and its handling of complaints
- consideration of the agency's electronic booking system
- brief visual inspection of the office premises and facilities

What does the service do well?

The agency has held the Investors In People Standard Award since 2005 and undertook its fourth review in January 2015. This award provides recognition that the service adopts best practice in people management. Evidence of this is provided in the body of the report.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection, the registered person was informed that the agency did not meet compliance with Regulation 14 (2) (a) of The Nurses Agencies (Wales) Regulations 2003. This is because some employees had not received supervision. Other staff, had been supervised but the sessions had not been regular, and in accordance with National Minimum Standard (NMS) 21.6 (i.e. at least every three months). On this occasion we found that the agency met the regulatory requirement and NMS specifications.

What needs to be done to improve the service?

We did not identify any regulatory non-compliances during this inspection visit. We made the following good practice recommendation to ensure staff recruitment processes are as thorough as possible:

- Application forms should request the month as well as the year of an applicant's previous employment dates to enable gaps in employment history to be detected.

Quality of Life

This domain is not applicable to nursing agencies.

Quality of Staffing

Overall, we found that Andover provides a reliable and efficient service which meets the needs of its staff and its purchasers. We found recruitment and induction processes to be robust and staff training was comprehensive and varied. Good communication between all parties ensured that the business was well run and met its aims and objectives.

The agency is able to provide service purchasers with staff who have the skills to meet the needs of the people to whom care is delivered. This is because its quality assurance processes commence with thorough recruitment practices which meet regulatory requirements. We looked at four staff personnel files and saw evidence of identity checks, disclosure and barring information, qualifications and reference checks. In the case of registered nurses, the registered manager sought their personal identification number (PIN) to ensure they had maintained their membership with their regulatory body (Nursing and Midwifery Council). We found that where gaps in an applicant's employment history had been noticed, the registered manager had sought the missing information. In order to achieve best practice in this area, we recommended to the registered manager and RI that application forms should request the month as well as the year of an applicant's previous employment dates so that gaps in employment history do not go undetected.

We saw that the agency provided each member of staff, once in post, with a comprehensive induction programme. Following its satisfactory completion, regular, formal training was organised to meet the requirements of the nurses and healthcare workers and to ensure that they were up-to-date with skills and knowledge to carry out their roles effectively. We saw that training consisted of mandatory courses for all staff such as manual handling, infection control, health and safety, and protection of vulnerable adults, which were organised on a monthly basis. Specialist training was also provided for registered nurses and healthcare support workers depending on the area to which they were being assigned. For example, for staff who supported people with mental health needs, courses relating to specific medical conditions, challenging behaviour and deprivation of liberty safeguards were organised. We found that the agency had made significant progress with staff training over the past year. There was evidence of progressive sourcing of interesting and varied courses. Although DVD training was still available and remained a valuable tool, external training was also being provided by various organisations. The registered manager informed us that she has sat in on some of the new courses to assess their quality and suitability. Staff also provided feedback following the sessions so that the management could assess their value and relevance. We spoke with a staff member who told us, *"Training is great. I've attended lots of interesting courses which have really helped me in my work."*

Service purchasers can be assured that staff are well supervised and are supported to remain in good health. At the previous inspection the registered manager was informed that staff supervision needed to be carried out on a regular basis to meet regulatory requirements and National Minimum Standards. On this occasion we saw from our examination of staff personnel files that supervision was being conducted within the recommended timescale of three months, albeit on an ad-hoc basis to fit in with staff rotas. Supervision, in this context, refers to staff members meeting on a confidential one-to-one basis with their line manager to discuss their performance, training needs or any issues of concern. We were informed that group supervision also took place and a member of staff told us that they were able to discuss concerns at any time with the registered manager, not just in formal sessions. We found that the registered manager also arranged clinical supervision and saw evidence that all staff received a formal annual appraisal of their work which they had the opportunity to discuss. Self-appraisal

forms have recently been introduced which staff complete before their appraisal.

Staff benefit from an Occupational Health Service which offers advice and support to maintain their health and wellbeing. We found that clinics were held at the agency office once a month although staff could also access the off-site service on a weekly basis if needed. All staff completed a detailed health questionnaire at the start of their employment and received advice or risk assessments where necessary to enable them to safely carry out their work. Immunisations and booster vaccinations were also provided for the protection of staff and those they look after.

Quality of Leadership and Management

Overall we found that Andover provides a reliable and efficient service. This is because the management continually strives for quality improvement. We received positive feedback about the leadership from purchasers of the service and from agency staff, and saw evidence of the service's achievements over the past year.

Purchasers of the service can be confident that the management is supportive and appreciative of its staff, and communicates effectively with them. This promotes staff motivation and a positive attitude to work, which in turn benefits the people to whom they provide care. We spoke with two staff members who praised the agency's strong leadership and told us they felt valued. They confirmed that 24 hour support was available because a manager or senior member of staff was always on call to offer advice. We found that communication had also been enhanced by the introduction of a quarterly newsletter which kept people up-to-date with changes and developments in the service. We were informed that in addition to this, the agency used a popular social networking website as a closed group to communicate with its staff. Also, over the past year, an Agency Worker of the Month award had been introduced which had been well-received by staff and provided further recognition of good practice and contribution.

We viewed the Investors in People end of three year review report (produced in January 2015) which stated that staff questionnaire feedback about the service management had overall been very positive. Identified strengths included good team work, interesting and diverse training for staff and a supportive "family feel" to the business. Staff also stated that they were not pressurised to accept shifts as the management valued a good work/life balance.

Purchasers can be assured that they contract with a service which drives quality improvement and is compliant with regulatory requirements. We saw that the registered manager produced weekly reports which included feedback from purchasers, complaints received or concerns raised, and any staff-related issues. We viewed the last QA report (2014) and found that this was generally positive. An identified area for improvement was communication with regards to business objectives. We found that progress in this area had since been made, as detailed above.

We examined the agency's Service User Guide which was comprehensive and included a clear outline of its aims and objectives; the qualifications and experience of the management team and the remit of the service. It also detailed its Complaints Procedure and signposted the reader to CSSIW for further advice if needed. Since the last inspection, the agency had made us aware of a small number of formal complaints received in relation to members of staff. We saw during our visit that these had been dealt with efficiently and in accordance with regulatory requirements. Staff disciplinary processes were used where necessary to maintain the quality of the service and purchaser confidence. We spoke with two representatives of organisations to which the agency provided a service. One told us they used only unregistered staff (i.e. healthcare support workers) and stated, *"It's an excellent service. Staff always turn up on time and any complaints are dealt with quickly."* The person also informed us that the agency was keen to work alongside them and support the workshops they organised for staff. The other representative told us their company used only registered nurses and said, *"The service is very reliable. We have no problems with the staff sent to work here."*

We also found the management to be supportive of the office-based staff and it was clear that the whole service pulled together as a team. We viewed the electronic booking system managed by dedicated administrative staff and found it to be effective and

reliable. The registered manager informed us that the agency's computer system had undergone modification and software had been devised specifically for Andover Nursing Services. We were told that the system was able to produce a variety of reports and information which could be accessed remotely. We saw, as an example, that every month it produced a printout of the nursing staff whose PIN was due for renewal. This alert enabled the management to remind staff to renew their registration with the Nursing and Midwifery Council, which they are legally bound to do in order to continue practicing as nurses.

Quality of The Environment

The relevance of this domain is limited in respect of nursing agency inspections.

We found that the office boasts a prominent position in Aberdare and has proved to be a convenient area for staff recruitment. Since the agency's move to this area, it has acquired new purchasers, which has supported the expansion of the service.

The office base is set over two floors and provides ample space for the secure storage of confidential information. We saw that there were meeting rooms and staff training facilities as well as a resource centre for use by all staff for professional development.

How we inspect and report on services

We conduct two types of inspection; baseline and focused. Both consider the experience of people using services.

- **Baseline inspections** assess whether the registration of a service is justified and whether the conditions of registration are appropriate. For most services, we carry out these inspections every three years. Exceptions are registered child minders, out of school care, sessional care, crèches and open access provision, which are every four years.

At these inspections we check whether the service has a clear, effective Statement of Purpose and whether the service delivers on the commitments set out in its Statement of Purpose. In assessing whether registration is justified inspectors check that the service can demonstrate a history of compliance with regulations.

- **Focused inspections** consider the experience of people using services and we will look at compliance with regulations when poor outcomes for people using services are identified. We carry out these inspections in between baseline inspections. Focused inspections will always consider the quality of life of people using services and may look at other areas.

Baseline and focused inspections may be scheduled or carried out in response to concerns.

Inspectors use a variety of methods to gather information during inspections. These may include;

- Talking with people who use services and their representatives
- Talking to staff and the manager
- Looking at documentation
- Observation of staff interactions with people and of the environment
- Comments made within questionnaires returned from people who use services, staff and health and social care professionals

We inspect and report our findings under 'Quality Themes'. Those relevant to each type of service are referred to within our inspection reports.

Further information about what we do can be found in our leaflet 'Improving Care and Social Services in Wales'. You can download this from our website, [Improving Care and Social Services in Wales](#) or ask us to send you a copy by telephoning your local CSSIW regional office.

