

Scottish Nursing Guild Nurse Agency

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Unannounced

Completed on:

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Service provided by:

Independant Clinical Services Ltd

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About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at: www.careinspectorate.com

During the inspection we used the new Health and Social Care Standards to evaluate the care and support that nurses working for the Scottish Nursing Guild gave people. The standards focus on the experience of people using services and describe what people can expect, the standards can be accessed at: www.gov.scot

This service registered as a nurse agency with the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. The Scottish Nursing Guild (SNG) nurse agency shares its Edinburgh office with the organisations care at home service. The managers of the nurse agency and care at home service work closely together to coordinate care and support for people living all over Scotland. The nurse agency provides nurses to the NHS, care homes and works closely with the SNG care at home service to provide nurses, mainly through private arrangements to people in their own home. If people also need health care assistants (HCAs) the care at home service provides these so that people can experience responsive care. SNGs approach aligns with the Health and Social Care Standards, which highlight that people should experience care that is consistent and stable because people and organisations work together well.

This report focuses on the nurse agency and in particular the provision of nurses to people in their own homes. To read about care provided by health care assistants see the Scottish Nursing Guild care at home inspection report.

The Scottish Nursing Guild's aim and objectives include being able to provide care and support; "when no one else can" because the service can offer staff at short notice. This allows organisations like the local authority prepare to provide care. More importantly it can mean that people go home from hospital earlier, supported by SNG while their care and support package is organised – see the provider's website for more information: <https://www.scottish-nursing-guild.com/>

What people told us

During the inspection the service was providing care and support to 23 people in their own homes. The agency also provided nurses to care homes, though during this inspection we focused on the provision of nurses to people in their own home. We spoke with eight people using the SNG, including their relatives and received questionnaires from eight people. Overall people told us that the care and support offered to them, or their relative was excellent. Comments included:

"If it wasn't for SNG nurses the quality of my life would be terrible; they help me to stay in my own home at the end of my life – so important to me."

"I find the staff competent and understanding of the complex needs of my son..... I know he enjoys their visits as he mentions them by name and is always pleased to see them."

"The staff are fantastic and I cannot praise them highly enough."

Other comments and views have been included within the report.

Self assessment

We are not asking services to submit a self assessment for this inspection year. During the inspection we discussed improvement plans. The manager has short and medium term plans identifying improvements they intend to make.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of Information	not assessed
Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

The quality of care and support was excellent. We heard about relationships between clients, their relatives and nurses that were warm, caring and that had a positive impact on people's lives.

"They take such good care of my son and cope so well..... they have built up a good friendship with him and because of all this it means I can really relax and enjoy my very much needed respite break."

People experienced high quality care and support because nurses were carefully selected and their skills and expertise matched to the needs and wishes of clients. For example, during the inspection the relative of one person with very complex needs felt they could trust the small team of SNG nurses and did not ever worry when they were caring for them. Another relative told us how the nurses supported him and his wife during the end stages of his wife's life, doing so with kindness and empathy while using their clinical skills to manage her pain. Where SNG provided nurses to people as part of a bigger care package they worked closely with the other organisation(s) and professionals. This made sure they complemented and added value to care and support for people.

We evaluated that for people in their own homes there was excellent involvement in both the planning and delivery of their care. For example, one person who had frequent visits to hospital for special treatment told us:

"Each time I come out of hospital the nurses check on the care I need and if there are changes. It is a progressive condition that I have and I know that if it wasn't for the SNG nurses I simply wouldn't manage to get back home. I cannot stress how important being home is to me, and they make it possible."

The manager and staff working in the office supported nurses to undertake their work and we saw everyone respecting privacy and confidentiality of people experiencing care. One person told us:

"I have had shifts covered by SNG at very short notice, the staff at the call centre are always very polite and helpful."

The quality of nurses and the agencies responsiveness was very good. Nurses were appropriately and safely recruited and registered with the Nursing Midwifery Council. We spoke to nurses who felt valued:

"They ensure I am up to date with any training that is required for the job."

"Twenty-four hour support from the SNG office which I have used out of hours and felt so supported."

"I'm proud to say that I work for SNG."

Nurses had built trusting and supportive relationships with people experiencing care, this included the person's family and carers. For example, one relative told us:

"Their staff are trained to much higher standards and their reliability cannot be faulted."

Both the agency and care at home managers were nurses who worked together with a clinical team to support and encourage nurses to reflect on their practice. This supported nurses to identify areas they wanted to improve and support was given to enhance their practice, helping to improve experiences for people they nursed.

What the service could do better

While gaining feedback from people receiving care in their own home was something SNG did well, we discussed gathering feedback about agency nurses from other clients. In particular, people experiencing care in care homes and hospitals where SNG provide nurses. We suggested the possibility of nurses having post cards that they could leave with people to fill in and return to the SNG manager, or the manager requesting an invite to a resident meeting. Gaining feedback will help the manager evaluate the quality of care as well as supporting nurses to reflect and improve their practice. This feedback is also essential for nurses' re-validation with the Nursing Midwifery Council.

We discussed with the manager the Scottish Governments standards for dementia and the Promoting Excellence Framework, suggesting that nurses caring for people with dementia would benefit from this additional training. As the agency provides nurses to care homes for older people we discussed the importance of their knowledge and skills being at a high level. We suggested nurses might want to get involved with the Scottish Social Services Council Dementia Ambassadors, facilitating sharing of new and innovative approaches to caring and supporting people with dementia in whatever setting they are in. The SSSC have a free resource promoting excellence in dementia care available at: <http://www.sssc.uk.com/workforce-development/supporting-your-development/promoting-excellence-in-dementia-care>

We asked the manager to make sure they had the contact details for adult and child protection teams in all the areas where the nurses worked. This included Fife, Tayside, Aberdeen and the Borders. During the inspection the manager started to gather the contact numbers which will help ensure any concerns can be quickly and appropriately reported.

Because the Scottish Nursing Guild nurse agency and care at home service worked closely together some of the notifications they need to tell us about had been muddled up. We discussed this with the team responsible for notifying us who took immediate action to put things right and clarified how to make future notifications.

One area that the notifications highlighted related to agency nurses working in care homes making drug administration errors. We suggested mechanisms to reduce the risk of drug errors, including auditing errors over the past 12 to 18 months. This helps to see if there are common causes that could inform ways to reduce errors in the future. This is not always about training for nurses, it may include working with the care home to explore how things can jointly be improved.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
14 Jun 2017	Announced (short notice)	Information Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		Not assessed 6 - Excellent Not assessed 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
21 May 2014	Unannounced	Information Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		5 - Very good 5 - Very good Not assessed 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
27 Mar 2013	Announced (short notice)	Information Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good 4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
22 Feb 2010	Announced	Information Care and support Environment Staffing
		6 - Excellent 5 - Very good Not assessed 6 - Excellent

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
31 Mar 2009	Announced	Information	5 - Very good
		Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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