



*Making Social Care
Better for People*

inspection report

NURSES AGENCY

Nurse Plus and Care Plus (UK) Ltd

**Suite 3&5 The Business House
1A The Avenue
Newton Abbot
Devon
TQ12 2BZ**

Lead Inspector
Clare Medlock

Unannounced Inspection
30th April 2007 10:00

The Commission for Social Care Inspection aims to:

- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

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This is a report of an inspection to assess whether services are meeting the needs of people who use them. The legal basis for conducting inspections is the Care Standards Act 2000 and the relevant National Minimum Standards for this agency are those for *Nurses Agencies*. They can be found at www.dh.gov.uk or obtained from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering: www.tso.co.uk/bookshop

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SERVICE INFORMATION

Name of service	Nurse Plus and Care Plus (UK) Ltd
Address	Suite 3&5 The Business House 1A The Avenue Newton Abbot Devon TQ12 2BZ
Telephone number	01626 366398
Fax number	
Email address	newtonabbot@nurseplusuk.com
Provider Web address	
Name of registered provider(s)/company (if applicable)	Nurse Plus and Carer Plus (UK) Ltd
Name of registered manager (if applicable)	Mrs Stacey Lopez
Type of registration	Nurses Agencies

SERVICE INFORMATION

Conditions of registration:

Date of last inspection 9th November 2006

Brief Description of the Service:

The Newton Abbott branch of Nurses Plus is a nurses agency which also operates as an employment business. The agency operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year from the office in Newton Abbott. Nurses Plus have a registered office in Portland, Dorset.

The local branch operates from an office within a walking distance of the town centre of Newton Abbot. The office is situated on the first floor of an office block. There is a pay and display car park within walking distance.

A general manager manages the branch. The Manager employs a recruitment administrator and also a registered nurse, who attends the branch on an ad hoc basis to conduct interviews, health assessments, staff training and offer nursing expertise.

The Newton Abbott branch of Nurse Plus Nursing agency employs approximately 40 Staff, one of which is a Registered Nurse. These staff are placed in Care Homes, Hospices and homes of private Individuals. At the time of inspection Nurses Plus were not supplying registered nurses to Service Users own homes and were not providing services to children.

The range of fees varies greatly depending on grade of nurse, time of shift and place of work. All rates are tailor made for each client. The Statement of Purpose and Service User Guide are available within the office. The inspection report was found displayed on the notice board in the main office area.

SUMMARY

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

This inspection was unannounced and took place on Monday 30th April 2007. The Inspection was performed to gain a picture of how the new agency is performing. It consisted of a visit to the Registered office, tour of the premises, written records, documents, and staff files.

Questionnaire were sent to staff and clients. Seven client Questionnaires were received and six staff questionnaires were received which were all complimentary about the service and manager. No Requirements were made at this inspection. One minor recommendation was made

What the service does well:

Nurses Plus nursing agency provide a small friendly, efficient service providing both Care Staff and Registered Nurses to a variety of settings. These settings include Nursing Homes, Care Homes, Hospices and sending trained nurses to clients own homes. This service is for 24 hours, seven days a week 365 days of the year.

Staff are carefully selected and recruited to ensure they have had all the checks needed to work at the place of work. Staff have access to a detailed staff handbook, policies and procedures, training and a Registered Nurse at the local branch for advice and guidance. The staff handbook and policies have information regarding equality and diversity.

The Management of the agency is good; the Manager has the skills and experience to run the agency in an efficient and effective way. The agency is also supported by the corporate organisation to which it belongs. Staff at the branch in Newton Abbot have access to records, advice and guidance from head office who are available by telephone at all times.

The service is new and the Manager and office staff know all clients and staff very well. Staff have had time to complete records in a consistent detailed way.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Because the agency has recently been set up, staff have had time to complete records in a consistent detailed way. In the time that has passed since the last inspection in November 2006 evidence showed that the agency are capable of maintaining a good standard of service over a period of time.

The manager ensure all clients received a copy of the Statement of Purpose, Service User Guide and other documents which are needed to make sure they have all the information needed to decide whether nurses plus are able to meet their needs. The Manager has also obtained evidence that these clients have received this information.

The Manager has ensured that her skills and knowledge is kept up to date by attending courses relevant to the business. This ensures she is constantly updating her skills to provide an up to date service.

The manager and administrator have maintained the standard of recruitment at the agency. The Manager is monitoring training needs to ensure staff do not get out of date with mandatory training. Staff needing POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) training, have been identified and training has been carried out and booked. This will make sure staff are aware of how to recognise and prevent signs of abuse. In addition of this if abuse is suspected staff will know the correct ways of reporting it.

The Manager now keeps written records of what action has been taken if staff have convictions on their CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) check and permission from head office if they are allowed to work. This shows that staff are treated fairly and will also protect service users and clients from risk.

The Manager also continues to perform POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adults) first checks on staff, before they work in a supervised setting, whilst the agency wait for the CRB check to be returned.

The Manager now performs risk assessments on the places where staff are to work. This will ensure the Service User Guide statement and Health and safety policy is followed by the agency and will protect staff.

What they could do better:

The Manager must work to maintain the standard of service as the business grows. By maintaining the friendly approach relationships and communication will be maintained.

Continuing to listen to the Service Users, clients and staff, will highlight areas where improvements need to be made. The Manager must continue to ensure that the systems in place or the systems that are planned are continued and performed.

Small changes will also provide prompts for staff to ask relevant questions when recruiting staff. By including an area on the application form to note the

ability for staff to speak, understand and write English will ensure staff can understand instructions, write records and communicate well with clients and Service Users.

Please contact the provider for advice of actions taken in response to this inspection.

The report of this inspection is available from enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk or by contacting your local CSCI office. The summary of this inspection report can be made available in other formats on request.

DETAILS OF INSPECTOR FINDINGS

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Information (Standard 1)

Registered Persons (Standard 2)

Recruitment and Supply of Nurses (Standards 3-6)

Complaints and Protection (Standards 7-11)

Management and Administration (Standards 12-18)

Scoring of Outcomes

Statutory Requirements Identified During the Inspection

Information

The intended outcome for Standard 1 is:

1. Prospective service users have the information they need about the agency in order to make an informed decision on whether to engage its services.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for standard:

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Nurses Plus have sufficient information available for clients to decide whether the agency can meet their needs.

EVIDENCE:

A Service User Guide and Statement of Purpose were available for inspection. Eight client questionnaires were received. All eight responses stated that the agency communicates clearly with clients. Comments included 'The Manager communicates well with us and makes sure we get the same staff back to provide continuity'

Discussion with the Manager confirmed that all clients have a been issued with a Statement of Purpose, Service User Guide, Complaints procedure, relevant rates, Terms of Business and other supporting information. Inspection of client files confirmed that this had been produced.

The Certificate of Registration was displayed within the office, this reflected the level of service that was being given.

Registered Persons

The intended outcome for Standard 2 is:

2. Service users are assured of the integrity of the agency and have confidence that it is run by a fit person or organisation.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at the outcome for standard:

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The manager is experienced and competent to run this agency.

EVIDENCE:

The branch Manager has been working at Nurses Plus since it began in March 2006. Prior to this she has worked as Manager in other Nurses agencies. She has recently done her NVQ 4 in Management, but has not done any further courses or training.

During the inspection the manager was polite, professional and co operative.

The Branch Manager stated that she is not a registered Nurse but has access to a Branch Registered General Nurse on an ad hoc basis. The Registered Nurse conducts interviews, health checks, staff induction and training. The Manager also has access to staff from head office for advice and support.

During the inspection a member of staff was visiting the office and was unaware of the inspection taking place. The Manager was seen to communicate well with the staff member using humour. The member of staff appeared to be able to communicate openly with the manager.

Comments on the staff Questionnaires included: Comments included:

I have never had any problems with the agency, I find management are very helpful and easy to talk to

Both Stacey and Penny are very friendly and help in what way they can and I have never felt under pressure to accept shifts

I have the highest regard for Mrs Lopez and her team. I have always found them very supportive and helpful. As an agency worker for 18 years I have known Mrs Lopez in her roles as agency manager. I have moved from agencies as Mrs Lopez has always done her best by me

Comments on client questionnaires included:

I have found nurses plus staff to be professional, courteous and helpful at all times

We have a very good relationship with the two main staff on the telephone. They will usually try to find carers who have worked before and therefore know our clients

I have been satisfied with the support of nurses plus. They have always listened to my views and at times I have requested not to have a particular carer return. I am pleased to say this is very rare, but they understand the type of carer I wish to have at the home. I would not use another agency

Recruitment and Supply of Nurses

The intended outcomes for Standards 3 - 6 are:

- 3.** The process for recruitment and selection of nurses meets all the requirements of legislation and employment law including that related to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice.
- 4.** Service users are confident that nurses supplied by the agency will provide good quality care and will not jeopardise the safety of patients.
- 5.** The agency has documentary evidence demonstrating the personal identification, registration, ongoing eligibility to be employed as a nurse, and relevant qualifications of each nurse to be supplied.
- 6.** Nurses supplied by the agency are competent and trained to undertake the activities for which they are employed and responsible.

The Commission considers Standards 3, 4 and 6 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

The robust recruitment and selection procedures protect Service Users from unsuitable staff.

EVIDENCE:

The recommendations set at the last inspection included issues around recruitment processes. The administrator explained that no new registered nurses have been recruited but allowed three care staff files to be inspected. These files were from new staff recruited since the last inspection.

Three staff files were inspected on this occasion. These files confirmed that the recruitment and selection process continues to be rigorous and as a result helps to protect Service Users and their relatives.

An interview question form is used to show the procedure is consistent. A branch RGN (Registered General Nurse) is used for trained nurse interviews and appraisals. The Branch Manager performs interviews on care staff. The

document used for interviews was seen. The Manager explained staff are asked to complete forms at the office to check written English. It was suggested to include a prompt for the interviewer to make a comment about the ability to speak English.

All files contained an application form, which contained all information necessary to meet equal opportunities and recruitment law. All files contained a full employment history. Gaps in employment had been investigated. All files contained recent photograph, and proof of identification,

Files showed that two references are obtained to ensure staff are suitable for the role they are about to perform. A health check and evidence of immunisation status (Tuberculosis and Varicella-chicken Pox) is also obtained to ensure staff are fit to carry out their roles.

All files contained evidence that Criminal records Bureau (Criminal records Bureau-police check) and POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adult) checks had been performed. The Manager confirmed that she continues to perform a POVA first check, which is received before the CRB is returned so staff can work in a supervised setting. The Manager also showed confirmation that any CRB's with a conviction are sent to head office for a decision to be made.

Staff files contained evidence that staff have received and understood the staff handbook, information on confidentiality, and medication procedures.

Training Certificates are stored in staff files and show that all staff have had an induction, mandatory training in respect of moving and handling, first aid, fire safety. Two of the files did not contain evidence that staff had received training in the recognition and prevention of Adult Protection issues, but the Manager was able to say which staff files did not have this and explained that dates for this had been booked within the next few weeks. Staff files contained evidence that all staff have received mandatory training. This information is then transferred to the computer systems. This information is then used to highlight which staff are due further training.

Two of the three care staff files contained evidence that care staff had received feedback on their practice. Member assessment forms are used for this purpose. These are kept on staff files to show the performance of staff and provide evidence of the Quality assurance checks that are checked at the branch.

Staff indemnity insurance is shown by union membership for trained staff, however the branch has additional indemnity insurance cover incorporated within the insurance policy. Details of this are found in the staff handbook.

Staff sign declarations to show they have received induction information, details of Code of Practice, Nursing Midwifery Council documents, staff

handbooks and training videos. Copies of the General Social Care Council Code of Practice were available in Braille.

Prior to work staff are also informed of how to obtain ID badges, uniforms, access training, and use the rewards scheme where applicants are able to earn points to use to pay for training, Criminal Records Bureau checks and other items. At this Registration stage staff are also informed about the content of the staff handbook.

Complaints and Protection

The intended outcomes for Standards 7 - 11 are:

7. Service users are confident that their complaints will be listened to, taken seriously and acted upon.
8. Service users who are also patients are protected from abuse, where the agency is an employment business.
9. Service users who are patients are protected by the agency's procedures for assistance with medication, where the agency is an employment business.
10. Action is taken to protect confidentiality of information relating to service users who are also patients, their carers and advocates.
11. The health, safety and welfare of service users who are also patients, and of nurses, are promoted and protected, where the agency is an employment business.

The Commission considers Standards 7, 8, 9 and 11 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

Service Users and Clients can be confident that Nurses Plus make sure complaints are dealt with properly.

The comprehensive policies, staff handbook, training and local policies are available, and have the potential to protect Service Users from abuse or harm.

EVIDENCE:

The Commission for Social Care Inspection have not received any formal complaints about nurses plus agency or their staff since the agency began trading in March 2006.

Client Questionnaires received confirmed that two of the seven clients had made a complaint or raised a concern. Of these two questionnaires both said the issue had been dealt with appropriately and promptly.

One comment received read: 'I have been satisfied with the support of nurses plus. They have always listened to my views and at times I have requested not to have a particular carer return. I am pleased to say this is very rare, but they understand the type of carer I wish to have at the home. I would not use another agency'

All questionnaires showed that clients knew who to report concerns to.

Complaints policies, procedures and processes were available within the office, Statement of Purpose, Service User Guide and staff handbooks. Policies and discussion with the Manager confirmed that complaints would be divided into different levels and dealt with according to guidance set by the organisation. Reporting processes are available if carers or trained staff need to be referred to the General Social Care Council or Nursing and Midwifery Council.

Records confirmed that the induction handbook and staff handbook contain policies on confidentiality. A tour of the building confirmed confidential records are kept within locked cabinets, which prevents information being seen. Discussion confirmed all computers are password protected.

On site shredding facilities are used by the agency and subscription to data protection services are used by the agency. Records were available to confirm these services. The building is locked at night. Computer data is backed up on a regular basis and separate computer servers are available which makes sure information is not lost.

Protection of Vulnerable adult policies are available within the staff handbook, agency policy folder and induction workbook. These policies mirror local guidance produced by Devon County Council. POVA (Protection of Vulnerable Adult) training is provided by the agency. Staff files confirmed that two of the six staff had not received this training.

All staff files contained evidence that staff had received written policies within the staff handbook. These policies included Roles, responsibilities and professional boundaries, confidentiality, Lone working, risk assessments within the home, handling violence and aggression, whistle blowing, use of electrical equipment, moving and handling, infection control, fire safety, medication policy, medication misuse, child protection, and protection of vulnerable adults.

Health and safety information within the staff handbook includes the health of employees, staff responsibilities which includes the importance of staff being aware of the policies on fire, moving and handling, COSHH (Control of

substances hazardous to health) and health and safety. Lone working policies are available for staff to follow.

The staff handbooks states that staff are asked to identify any hazards within their workplace and report them to the person in charge. Inspection of client files and discussion with the Manager confirmed that risk assessments for establishments are now performed by the agency to look for any issues, which could pose a hazard for staff. The Manager produced a document used for this purpose and stated that there has been no problem obtaining this information.

RIDDOR (Reporting of accidents/injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences) policies are available within the staff handbook, which inform staff that it is their responsibility to report and incidents or accidents.

Health and safety policies and posters were available within the office. First Aid boxes and books were available. The Manager stated that new fire extinguishers have been provided within the building but that the landlord has not addressed some issues yet.

Management and Administration

The intended outcomes for Standards 12 – 18 are:

- 12.** Approved accounting and financial procedures are adopted to ensure the effective and efficient running of the business and its continued financial viability.
- 13.** There are designated premises suitably equipped for the purpose of the day to day operation and management of the service.
- 14.** An appropriate management structure and clear lines of accountability are in place.
- 15.** Nurses supplied by the agency know the standards of conduct expected of them and are aware of the agency's organisational policies, where the agency is an employment business.
- 16.** There is a written agreement between the Agency and nurses.
- 17.** Service users' and nurses' interests are safeguarded by the agency's record keeping policies and procedures.
- 18.** The agency operates in the best interests of service users and of nurses supplied by it.

The Commission considers Standards 15 and 18 the key standards to be inspected.

JUDGEMENT – we looked at outcomes for the following standard(s):

Quality in this outcome area is **good**

This judgement has been made using available evidence including a visit to this service.

This agency continues to be well organised, efficiently managed, and operates from suitably equipped premises.

EVIDENCE:

Valid Insurance certificates were displayed within the office and cover liability and other cover for not less than £5 million. Indemnity insurance is included within these policies.

On the day of inspection the manager and administrator were processing timesheets. These generate invoices, which are sent by the finance department at head office. Monthly financial reports are given to each branch.

The premises contain all the information necessary for the efficient running of the business. Equipment including a computer system, fax, telephones, photocopier, TV and video player, and training room were available. All areas of the office were clean.

There is a clear line of accountability at Nurses plus. The Newton Abbott branch has a branch manager with one supporting administration member of staff. Further support is provided at the head office. The agency also employ a registered Nurse who visits the branch when needed, to perform interviews, induction, supervision and training.

The staff handbook is very detailed and contains easy to read documents to assist staff in their roles. Equality and diversity subjects are also included. These include: Equal opportunities, code of conduct, cross gender care, privacy and dignity, and philosophy of care.

Nurses Plus use clear policies which were written for when the agency started training.

As part of the induction pack Registered nurses are issued with a set of Nursing Midwifery Council publications. These include the Code of Practice and administration of medicines. The General Social Care Council Code of Practice is also available for all staff. These were on display in the office area.

All records seen were up to date, complete and securely stored. All information kept on the computer is password protected and can only be accessed by selected staff.

Comments on Staff Questionnaires confirmed that the branch Manager is supportive. Comments included:

I have never had any problems with the agency, I find management are very helpful and easy to talk to

Both Stacey and Penny are very friendly and help in what way they can

I have never felt under pressure to accept shifts

I have the highest regard for Mrs Lopez and her team. I have always found them very supportive and helpful. As an agency worker for 18 years I have known Mrs Lopez in her roles as agency manager. I have moved from agencies as Mrs Lopez has always done her best by me

Client comments included:

Well trained staff.

Stacey and Penny maintain continuity of staff placed

Found nurses plus staff to be professional, courteous and helpful at all times

We have a very good relationship with the two main staff on the telephone. They will usually try to find carers who have worked before and therefore know our clients

I have been satisfied with the support of nurses plus. They have always listened to my views and at times I have requested not to have a particular carer return. I am pleased to say this is very rare, but they understand the type of carer I wish to have at the home. I would not use another agency

All staff files contained evidence that staff had received a copy of the terms and conditions.

The Service User Guide contained information on how staff can express their views about the agency. Staff files confirmed that feedback on staff is obtained from clients and this information is stored within staff files and used at supervision and appraisal.

SCORING OF OUTCOMES

This page summarises the assessment of the extent to which the National Minimum Standards for Nurses Agencies have been met and uses the following scale.

4 Standard Exceeded (Commendable) **3** Standard Met (No Shortfalls)
2 Standard Almost Met (Minor Shortfalls) **1** Standard Not Met (Major Shortfalls)

"X" in the standard met box denotes standard not assessed on this occasion
 "N/A" in the standard met box denotes standard not applicable

INFORMATION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
1	3

REGISTERED PERSON	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
2	3

RECRUITMENT AND SUPPLY OF NURSES	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
3	3
4	3
5	2
6	3

COMPLAINTS AND PROTECTION	
<i>Standard No</i>	<i>Score</i>
7	3
8	3
9	3
10	3
11	3

MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION	
12	3
13	3
14	3
15	3
16	3
17	3
18	3

no

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Care Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider(s) must comply with the given timescales.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action

RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations relate to National Minimum Standards and are seen as good practice for the Registered Provider/s to consider carrying out.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
1.	NU5	The Manager should consider ways of gaining evidence that staff employed have a satisfactory knowledge of the English language.

Commission for Social Care Inspection

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