

# Key inspection report

## Nurses agencies

<b>Name:</b>	First Call Healthcare Ltd
<b>Address:</b>	Saltmeadows Road Gear House Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE8 3AH

**The quality rating for this nurses agency is:**

three star excellent service

A quality rating is our assessment of how well an agency is meeting the needs of the people who use it. We give a quality rating following a full review of the service. We call this full review a 'key' inspection.

<b>Lead inspector:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Janet Thompson	1 9 0 1 2 0 1 0

This is a review of quality of outcomes that people experience in this agency. We believe high quality care should

- Be safe
- Have the right outcomes, including clinical outcomes
- Be a good experience for the people that use it
- Help prevent illness, and promote healthy, independent living
- Be available to those who need it when they need it.

The first part of the review gives the overall quality rating for the agency:

- 3 stars - excellent
- 2 stars - good
- 1 star - adequate
- 0 star - poor

There is also a bar chart that gives a quick way of seeing the quality of care that the home provides under key areas that matter to people.

There is a summary of what we think this service does well, what they have improved on and, where it applies, what they need to do better. We use the national minimum standards to describe the outcomes that people should experience. National minimum standards are written by the Department of Health for each type of care service.

After the summary there is more detail about our findings. The following table explains what you will see under each outcome area.

**Outcome area (for example Information)**

**These are the outcomes that people using nurses agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:**

This box tells you the outcomes that we will always inspect against when we do a key inspection.

This box tells you any additional outcomes that we may inspect against when we do a key inspection.

**This is what people using this nurses agency experience:**

Judgement:

This box tells you our opinion of what we have looked at in this outcome area. We will say whether it is excellent, good, adequate or poor.

Evidence:

This box describes the information we used to come to our judgement.

We review the quality of the service against outcomes from the National Minimum Standards (NMS). Those standards are written by the Department of Health for each type of care service.

Copies of the National Minimum Standards – Nurses Agencies can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or bought from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering from the Stationery Office is also available: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

The mission of the Care Quality Commission is to make care better for people by:

- Regulating health and adult social care services to ensure quality and safety standards, drive improvement and stamp out bad practice
- Protecting the rights of people who use services, particularly the most vulnerable and those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983
- Providing accessible, trustworthy information on the quality of care and services so people can make better decisions about their care and so that commissioners and providers of services can improve services.
- Providing independent public accountability on how commissioners and providers of services are improving the quality of care and providing value for money.

## Reader Information

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## Information about the agency

Name of agency:	First Call Healthcare Ltd
Address:	Saltmeadows Road Gear House Gateshead Tyne and Wear NE8 3AH
Telephone number:	01914900783
Fax number:	01914900784
Email address:	
Provider web address:	

Name of registered provider(s):	First Call Healthcare Ltd
Conditions of registration:	
Date of last inspection	<input type="text"/>
Brief description of the agency	<p>First Call Healthcare Ltd is a nurse agency supplying registered nurses and care assistants to work in private care homes. The provider of the establishments supplied by the nurse agency is known as the service user. They do not currently provide staff to work in the individual homes of service users, who are patients. The office of First Call Healthcare Ltd is on the first floor of a business enterprise unit located on the Saltmeadows business estate, close to the city of Gateshead. It is easily accessed from the main bypass with secure parking to the rear of the building. The office is well equipped and staffed by a manager and an administrator.</p>

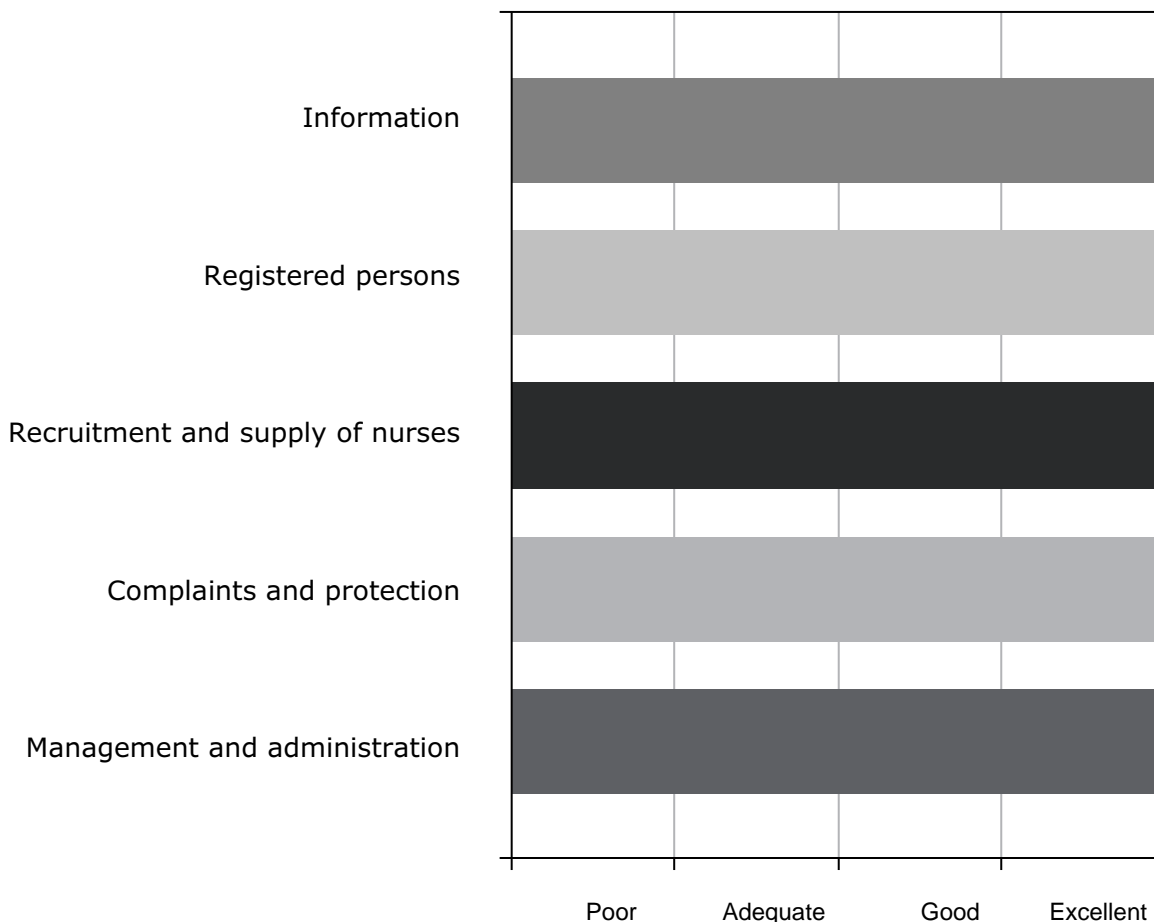
## Summary

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

The quality rating for this agency is:

three star excellent service

### Our judgement for each outcome:



### How we did our inspection:

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

The quality rating for this service is three stars. This means the people who use this service experience excellent quality outcomes.

We have reviewed our practice when making requirements. Some requirements from previous inspection reports may have been deleted or carried forward to this report as recommendations. This will only happen when it is considered that people who use the service are not being put at significant risk of harm. In future, if a requirement is repeated, it is likely that enforcement action will be taken.

Before the visit we looked at information we received since the last visit to the home. This includes how the service dealt with any complaints, changes to how the home is run, the views of people who use the service and the managers views of how well they

care for people.

A visit was made to the service on 19 January 2010. We gave the service two hours notice of our intended visit.

During the visit we talked with the manager. We looked at information about people who use the service and other records which must be kept. We checked that staff had the knowledge, skills and training to meet the needs of the people they care for and we looked at the location and facilities within the office.

Following the inspection feedback was given to the manager.

For the purposes of this report the service user is the terminology used for the care homes that the agency supplies staff to.

### **What the agency does well:**

Prospective service users are given good information about the agency to enable them to decide whether to engage its services. There is good communication between the agency and the service user regarding the type of service required and the level of satisfaction with the staff supplied.

The manager is competent and qualified enough to run the service. There were clear lines of responsibility and accountability within the management team and they seem to work well with staff and service users.

Staff are thoroughly screened before employment. The training for staff is very good as is the ongoing monitoring of staff's performance and development. The agency consults with service users regularly to check their continued satisfaction with the standard of staff supplied.

Complaints and incidents are taken seriously and service users are assured that their complaints will be listened to.

The record-keeping was generally very good. All required records were immediately available and up-to-date.

The office was suitably equipped for the purpose of the running and management of the service.

The management systems of review and audit ensure that the agency is run in the best interests of the service users whilst providing support to staff.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The service was running well at the last inspection and there were no areas for improvement identified.

### **What they could do better:**

There have not been any requirements or recommendations made at this inspection.

If you want to know what action the person responsible for this agency is taking following this report, you can contact them using the details on page 4.

The report of this inspection is available from our website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk). You can get printed copies from [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.uk) or by telephoning our order line 0870 240 7535.

## Details of our findings

### Contents

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)

Outstanding statutory requirements

Requirements and recommendations from this inspection

## Information

These are the outcomes that people using nurses agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

There are no key outcome areas.

People can decide whether the agency can meet their support needs and requirements. This is because they have got full, clear, accurate and up to date information about the agency.

**This is what people using this nurses agency experience:**

Judgement:

People using this service experience **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

Service users have access to good information about the agency before they engage its services.

Evidence:

The statement of purpose and service user guide contain the information required by the national minimum standards. The statement of purpose has been updated to reflect any changes in the service or the regulation of the service. The service user guide is easy to read and contains all contact details for the agency.

The agency operates a 24-hour on-call service, therefore there is always someone available to discuss issues with any of the service users. The manager visits all of the service users at the point of initial contract to discuss their expectations of the agency and answer any questions they may have.

## Registered persons

These are the outcomes that people using nurses agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

There are no key outcome areas.

People have confidence in the agency because it is led and managed by people who provide appropriate support.

### **This is what people using this nurses agency experience:**

Judgement:

People using this service experience **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

Service users are assured that the agency operates effectively and professionally.

Evidence:

The current registered manager is a director of the company and is also the responsible individual for CQC. However, she has handed managerial responsibility to a new manager. This manager has worked at the agency for a long period of time and is experienced in the role of recruitment. It is the intention that the new manager will seek registration with CQC.

The new manager demonstrated a good understanding of her role within the agency, including an excellent knowledge of requirements of the law pertinent to the running of the service. The agency has always worked well with CQC and the manager demonstrated a commitment to continue to do so. There was evidence that the manager took her role very seriously and had good procedures to review and improve the quality of the service.

## Recruitment and supply of nurses

These are the outcomes that people using nurses agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People have confidence in the staff at the agency because checks have been done to make sure that they are fit to do the job. People's needs are met and they are supported by staff who have the relevant training. People have safe and appropriate support as the staff providing their care are qualified and competent.

People know that the agency keeps accurate records of their staff, which the law says they must have.

**This is what people using this nurses agency experience:**

Judgement:

People using this service experience **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

Service users can be assured that nurses supplied by the agency have been properly recruited and have the necessary skills and training to carry out their job.

Evidence:

We looked at four staff files. These were for three registered nurses and one carer. All files contained evidence of thorough background checks before employment. These included seeking independent references, checking of criminal records, checking of identity and eligibility to work. At interview, prospective employees are given a multichoice questionnaire. This demonstrates their knowledge and attitude towards care and is used as part of the interview assessment process. The recruitment and selection policies and procedures are in line with equal opportunities legislation.

Personnel files also contain the training records for staff. All staff are updated annually in some required training areas. These are moving and handling, fire safety, food hygiene, health and safety, first aid, infection control, safeguarding adults and where applicable, the role of the care assistant. There is also a training plan held electronically. This highlights in red when required training is due. Staff who do not complete this training are not offered work until all training is up to date. As well as required training staff are also trained in vocational subjects such as medication administration and dementia care.

## Complaints and protection

**These are the outcomes that people using nurses agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:**

If people have concerns about the agency they, or people close to them, know how to complain. Their concern is looked into and action taken to put things right. The agency safeguards people from abuse and neglect and takes action to follow up any allegations. If people need help with their medicine, the agency supports them with it in a safe way. People using the agency, and nurses, are safeguarded because it follows good health and safety procedures, keeps records appropriately and ensures their staff follow policies and understand the importance of assessing risks.

People are confident that the agency handles information appropriately. This is because the agency follows their policies and procedures.

**This is what people using this nurses agency experience:**

Judgement:

People using this service experience **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

Service users are assured that their complaints are taken seriously and the safety and welfare of residents is promoted.

Evidence:

Service users are given an opportunity to comment on the performance of each staff member supplied to them. A performance monitoring form is sent to the service when a staff member is first placed then every three months after that.

All incoming complaints are recorded in a complaint folder. There have been three complaints or incidents in 2009. All of these were properly investigated and the appropriate authorities informed. One of the incidents involved an agency nurse identifying shortfalls in the procedures within a service. This shows that the agency staff are clear regarding their responsibilities in relation to whistleblowing and identification of poor practice.

All complaints or incidents were properly recorded, the records include outcomes and action taken in response to the complaints. The records were clear, concise and contained satisfactory levels of information. The manager reported that all complaints

Evidence:

are taken seriously and every effort is made to reach satisfactory outcomes.

All staff working at the agency had received training in adult protection. This training is considered essential and refreshers are held annually.

The agency does not supply staff to work in people's own home, therefore staff follow the complaints procedures which exist in the care homes they are working in. Where staff are required to administer medication this has already been identified and staff supplied will have been trained in medication management.

## Management and administration

These are the outcomes that people using nurses agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People are confident that the staff who provide support are clear about the standards expected of them and are aware of the agency's policies and procedures. People get planned support from the agency because the manager runs it appropriately and has an open approach that makes them feel valued and respected.

The offices are equipped to provide people with an appropriately managed service. They benefit from a management structure where people understand their roles and responsibilities. There is a written agreement between the agency and the nurses. People using the service, and the nurses, are safeguarded by accurate and up to date record keeping.

**This is what people using this nurses agency experience:**

Judgement:

People using this service experience **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

Effective and accountable management ensures that the agency operates in the best interests of the service users and of staff supplied by it.

Evidence:

The day-to-day operation of the service is carried out from a well equipped office. The office is accessible from public transport. Although the office is on the first floor of the building there are rooms available for use on the ground floor for visitors who may be unable to use stairs.

There are appropriate management arrangements within the office and the lines of accountability are clear. A registered nurse works with the management team to advise on nursing issues and assist in the recruitment of nurses.

Nurses supplied by the agency are given a staff handbook, this details the main policies of the agency and the expectations of the management team regarding their workforce. Staff are required to sign for receipt of the handbook, the terms of engagement and agree to attend training.

## Evidence:

There appears to be good communication between the service user, the staff and the agency. The manager attempts to visit every service user before placing staff with them. This visit is used as a basic risk assessment and an information gathering opportunity to enable the needs of the service to be assessed. Before staff are supplied to the service information is obtained as to the requirements of the type of staff needed. Staff are then matched to the service and an information sheet is faxed with details of that staff members experience and qualifications. The service user is able to give feedback on a performance monitoring form which is sent out every three months for each staff member.

Regular audits of customer satisfaction are carried out. The most recent audit was carried out in September 2009. This audit included staff as well as service users and a good percentage of audit forms were returned. We examined the forms returned and the collated results. We noted that there was a high level of satisfaction with the agency both as an employer of staff and a supplier of workers to the services.

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

Yes

No

## Outstanding statutory requirements

These are requirements that were set at the previous inspection, but have still not been met. They say what the registered person had to do to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Nurses Agencies Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action

## Requirements and recommendations from this inspection:

### Immediate requirements:

These are immediate requirements that were set on the day we visited this nurses agency. The registered person had to meet these within 48 hours.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action

### Statutory requirements

These requirements set out what the registered person must do to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Nurses Agencies Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must do this within the timescales we have set.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action

### Recommendations

These recommendations are taken from the best practice described in the National Minimum Standards and the registered person(s) should consider them as a way of improving their service.

No	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations

## Helpline:

**Telephone:** 03000 616161

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**Web:** [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

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