



The Regulation and
Quality Improvement
Authority

The Independent Medical Agency
RQIA ID: 12131
Boots Company Plc
1 Thane Road
Nottingham
NG2 3AA

Inspectors: Winnie Maguire
Carmel McKeegan
Inspection ID: IN022111

Tel: 01159595201

**Announced Inspection
of
The Independent Medical Agency**

8 February 2016

**The Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
9th Floor Riverside Tower, 5 Lanyon Place, Belfast, BT1 3BT
Tel: 028 9051 7500 Fax: 028 9051 7501 Web: www.rqia.org.uk**

1. Summary of Inspection

An announced care inspection took place on 8 February 2016 from 11.00 to 14.00. On the day of the inspection the agency was found to be delivering safe, effective and compassionate care. The outcome of the inspection found no areas for concern.

This inspection was underpinned by The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, The Regulation and Improvement Authority (Independent Health Care) (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011 and The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's (DHSPPS) Minimum Care Standards for Healthcare Establishments 2014.

1.1 Actions/Enforcement Taken Following the Last Inspection

There were no actions required to be taken following the last inspection.

1.2 Actions/Enforcement Resulting from this Inspection

Enforcement action did not result from the findings of this inspection.

1.3 Inspection Outcome

	Requirements	Recommendations
Total number of requirements and recommendations made at this inspection	0	0

This inspection resulted in no requirements or recommendations being made. Findings of the inspection were discussed with Miss Morag Punton, registered manager, and can be found in the main body of the report.

2. Service Details

Registered Organisation/Registered Person: Boots Company Plc Dr Graham Marshall	Registered Manager: Miss Morag Punton
Person in Charge of the Establishment at the Time of Inspection: Miss Morag Punton	Date Manager Registered: 7 August 2013
Categories of Care: IMA –(PD) Independent Medical Agency – Private Doctor	

3. Inspection Focus

The inspection sought to determine if the following standards have been met:

Standard 1:	Informed Decision Making
Standard 4:	Dignity, Respect and Rights
Standard 5:	Patient and Client Partnerships
Standard 7:	Complaints
Standard 8:	Records
Standard 10:	Qualifications Practitioners, Staff and Indemnity
Standard 11:	Practising Privileges

Other areas inspected: Incidents, insurance arrangements and RQIA registration.

4. Methods/Process

Specific methods/processes used in this inspection include the following:

The pre-assessment information, complaints return and request for supporting documentation was forwarded to the provider prior to the inspection. The registered provider or registered manager was requested to be available for contact via the telephone on the date of inspection at an agreed time. Having reviewed the records the registered manager was contacted at the conclusion of the inspection to discuss any issues and provide feedback on the findings.

At the conclusion of the inspection the inspector spoke with Miss Morag Punton, registered manager.

The following records were examined during the inspection:

- Five patient care records
- Patient satisfaction survey
- Summary report of patient satisfaction survey
- Policies and procedures
- Insurance documentation
- Information provided to patients
- One medical practitioners personnel file
- Practising privileges agreement
- Certificate of registration

5. The Inspection

Review of Requirements and Recommendations from Previous Inspection

The previous inspection of the agency was an announced care inspection dated 23/24 March 2015.

i.1 Review of Requirements and Recommendations from the Last Care Inspection

No requirements or recommendations made as a result of the previous inspection.

5.2 Standard 1 – Informed Decision Making

Is Care Safe?

Information about services provided by the agency was reviewed and found to accurately reflect the types of private doctor service provided and were in line with General Medical Council (GMC) Good Medical Practice. The costs of treatments were found to be up to date and include all aspects of the treatment.

Advertising campaigns and marketing strategies comply with guidance issued by the GMC.

Is Care Effective?

The agency provides an information leaflet to all patients that outlines the services and treatments provided. The agency also has a website which contains comprehensive information regarding the types of treatment provided. Prospective patients and other interested parties can contact the agency for information via the website.

The Statement of Purpose and Patient Guide were reviewed and found to contain all of the information required by legislation. The Patient Guide is made available on the website.

Information provided to patients and/or their representatives is written in plain English.

Is Care Compassionate?

Discussion with Miss Punton and review of documentation confirmed that information provided to patients affords a transparent explanation of their condition and any treatment, investigation or procedure proposed. The information also includes any risks, complications, options and the expected outcome of the treatment or procedure. Patients are fully involved in planning their care and treatment.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.2 Standard 4 – Dignity, Respect and Rights

Is Care Safe?

Discussion with Miss Punton confirmed that the patient's dignity is respected at all times during the consultation and treatment process. Consultations are provided online through the website.

Miss Punton confirmed that patient care records were stored securely.

Is Care Effective?

It was confirmed through the above discussion that patients are treated in accordance with the DHSSPS standards for Improving the Patient & Client Experience.

Patients consult via the website regarding their treatment and are fully involved in decisions regarding their treatment. Patients' wishes are respected and acknowledged by the agency.

Is Care Compassionate?

Discussion with Miss Punton and review of five patient care records confirmed that patients are treated and cared for in accordance with legislative requirements for equality and rights.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.3 Standard 5 – Patient and Client Partnerships

Is Care Safe?

All patients are asked for their comments in relation to the quality of treatment provided, information and care received.

The information from the patient comments is collected in an anonymised format, summarised and used by the agency to make improvements to services.

Is Care Effective?

The Independent Medical Agency obtains the views of patients as an integral part of the service they deliver.

The agency issued feedback questionnaires to patients receiving the flu vaccination service in Northern Ireland and 17 were returned and completed. Review of the completed questionnaires found that patients were highly satisfied with the quality of treatment, information and care received. Comments from patients included:

- "Very pleasant efficient and kindly "
- "Professional and informative"
- "Absolutely excellent"
- "Extremely helpful and professional "
- "Really put us at our ease"

The information received from the patient feedback questionnaires is collated into an annual summary report which is made available to patients and other interested parties to read on the website of the agency.

Discussion with Miss Punton confirmed that comments received from patients are reviewed by senior management as part of their governance arrangements.

No issues were identified as requiring to be addressed.

Is Care Compassionate?

Review of patient care records and discussion with Miss Punton confirmed that treatment and care are planned and developed with meaningful patient involvement; facilitated and provided in a flexible manner to meet the assessed needs of each individual patient.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.4 Standard 7 - Complaints

Is Care Safe?

No complaints have been recorded by the agency since the last inspection. However, systems are in place to investigate and respond to complaints within 28 working days (in line with regulations) or if this is not possible, Miss Punton confirmed that complainants will be kept informed of any delays and the reason for this.

Discussion with Miss Punton confirmed that information from complaints is used to improve the quality of services.

Is Care Effective?

It is not in the remit of RQIA to investigate complaints made by or on the behalf of individuals, as this is the responsibility of the providers. However, if there is considered to be a breach of regulation as stated in The Independent Health Care Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005, RQIA has a responsibility to review the issues through inspection.

A complaints questionnaire was forwarded by the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) to the agency for completion. The returned questionnaire indicated that no complaints have been received for the period 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2015.

Miss Punton demonstrated a good understanding of complaints management.

A complaints audit is undertaken quarterly if necessary.

The complaints procedure is contained within the Patient Guide; copies of which are available on the agency's website for patients to read.

Is Care Compassionate?

A copy of the complaints procedure is provided to patients and to any person acting on their behalf.

Miss Punton confirmed that the complainant would be notified of any outcome or action taken by the agency to address concerns raised.

Discussion with Miss Punton demonstrated that the core values of privacy, dignity, respect and patient choice are understood. Complaints were found to be handled in a sensitive manner.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.5 Standard 8 - Records

Is Care Safe?

Discussion with Miss Punton and review of training records confirmed that appropriate staff have received training in records management. Miss Punton also confirmed that all staff are aware of the importance of effective records management and records are held in line with best practice guidance and legislative requirements. Patient care records are held securely. Computerised records are accessed using individual usernames and passwords.

The agency is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office.

Is Care Effective?

Review of documentation confirmed that the agency has a range of policies and procedures in place for the management of records which includes the arrangements for the creation, use, retention, storage, transfer, disposal of and access to records.

The agency also has a policy and procedure in place for clinical record keeping in relation to patient treatment and care which complies with General Medical Council (GMC) guidance and Good Medical Practice.

Review of five patient care records relating to the services provided by the agency found that all entries were completed in line with best practice and had a contemporaneous record of consultation and treatment provided. The records were found to be maintained in line with best practice guidance.

There are systems in place to audit the completion of clinical patient records and an action plan is developed to address any identified issues. The outcome of the audit is reviewed through the agency's clinical governance structures.

Miss Punton confirmed that records required by legislation were retained and can be made available for inspection at all times.

Is Care Compassionate?

Discussion with Miss Punton and review of the management of records policy confirmed that patients have the right to apply for access to their clinical records in accordance with the Data

Protection Act 1988 and where appropriate Information Commissioner's Office regulations and Freedom of Information legislation.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.6 Standard 10 – Qualified Practitioners, Staff and Indemnity

Is Care Safe?

Review of the details of one medical practitioner confirmed:

- evidence of confirmation of identity;
- evidence of current registration with the General Medical Council (GMC);
- the medical practitioner is covered by the appropriate professional indemnity insurance;
- the medical practitioner has provided evidence of experience relevant to their scope of practice;
- evidence of enhanced AccessNI disclosure check;
- there was evidence of ongoing professional development and continuing medical education that meets the requirements of the Royal Colleges and GMC to ensure the medical practitioner can safely and competently undertake the treatments and services they offer;
- there was evidence of ongoing annual appraisal by a trained medical appraiser; and
- a responsible officer had been appointed.

Arrangements are in place to support medical practitioners, with a licence to practice, to fulfil the requirements for revalidation through providing sufficient information to the responsible officer to support their revalidation, for medical practitioner who is not an employee.

Discussion with Miss Punton confirmed that arrangements are in place for dealing with professional alert letters, managing identified lack of competence and poor performance for all staff, including those with practising privileges. There are also mechanisms for reporting incompetence in line with guidelines issued by the Department of Health and professional regulatory bodies.

Is Care Effective?

Discussion with Miss Punton confirmed that medical practitioners are aware of their responsibilities under GMC Good Medical Practice.

Medical practitioners abide by published codes of professional practice relevant to their scope of practice and retain evidence that professional registration and revalidation requirements are met.

Is Care Compassionate?

Discussion with Miss Punton and review of documentation demonstrated that the core values of privacy, dignity, respect and patient choice are understood by the medical practitioners providing services within the agency.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.7 Standard 11 – Practising Privileges

Is Care Safe?

Discussion with Miss Punton and review of the medical practitioners file as outlined in Standard 10 confirmed that all information required by legislation is retained by the agency prior to practising privileges being granted.

Is Care Effective?

The Independent Medical Agency has a policy and procedure in place which outlines the arrangements for the application, granting, maintenance, suspension and withdrawal of practising privileges. The practising privileges agreement defines the scope of practice for each individual medical practitioner.

All practising privileges are reviewed and approved by the Medical Director

There are systems in place to review practising privileges agreements every two years.

Is Care Compassionate?

The practising privileges agreement includes arrangements to ensure patients are treated with dignity and respect at all times while respecting their rights.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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5.8 Additional Areas Examined

8.1. Management of Incidents

The agency has an incident policy and procedure in place which includes reporting arrangements to RQIA.

Discussion with and review of incident management found that incidents were well documented, fully investigated and had outcomes recorded.

Audits of incidents are undertaken and learning outcomes are identified and disseminated throughout the organisation.

8.2. RQIA Registration and Insurance Arrangements

Discussion with Miss Punton regarding the insurance arrangements within the agency confirmed that current insurance policies were in place. Miss Punton confirmed that the RQIA certificate of registration was clearly displayed in the main office of the agency.

Areas for Improvement

No areas for improvement were identified during the inspection.

Number of Requirements	0	Number Recommendations:	0
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No requirements or recommendations resulted from this inspection.

I agree with the content of the report.			
Registered Manager	<i>Wongkuk</i>	Date Completed	15/3/16
Registered Person	<i>emars hall</i>	Date Approved	15/03/16
RQIA Inspector Assessing Response	<i>Wongkuk</i>	Date Approved	16/03/16

Please provide any additional comments or observations you may wish to make below:

Please ensure this document is completed in full and returned to independent.healthcare@rqia.org.uk from the authorised email address

It should be noted that this inspection report should not be regarded as a comprehensive review of all strengths and weaknesses that exist in the agency. The findings set out are only those which came to the attention of RQIA during the course of this inspection. The findings contained within this report do not absolve the registered person(s) from their responsibility for maintaining compliance with minimum standards and regulations.