

QUALITY ASSURANCE & MONITORING POLICY

Document name:	Quality Assurance & Monitoring Policy
Document Classification:	Quality Assurance
Document No:	QA001
Version:	1.0
Name of Originator/Author:	Claire Turner
Policy Reviewer:	Lorraine Gallier
Date Created:	November 2020
Review Date:	April 2021
Responsible Committee:	Operational Committee
Superseded Policy (if applicable):	N/A
Target Audience:	Directors, Managers, Clinicians, Staff
Other Relevant Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Agency Worker Handbook ● Recruitment Policy ● Complaints Policy ● Appraisals Policy ● Medicines Management Policy ● Infection Control Policy

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1.0 INTRODUCTION:

Definition of Quality Assurance

“The maintenance of a desired level of quality in a service or product, especially by means of attention to every stage of the process of delivery or production”

Quality assurance implies a **clear understanding of what is meant by “quality”** and a **valid and reliable method for evaluating the care that is provided..**

SOS Medical staffing aim to provide high quality provision of staff to Acute Trusts and Residential and Care homes. To this end, SOS Medical monitor the behaviours, compliances and experience and training of staff when matching staff to clients requirements.

Quality assurance begins and ends with the service users – the key customer. For any quality assurance programme to be successful, their views must be sought on a regular basis and action taken if a service no longer appears to be meeting their needs. This applies to both Clients and healthcare workers undertaking shifts via SOS Medical Staffing.

2.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of SOS Medical Staffing and is accessible on the Shared Drive.

3.0 AIMS

This policy aims to provide a structure of how quality assurances will be measured and evidenced, and the timescales and reporting procedure to the Senior Management Team.

4.0 ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Senior Management Team

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management Team to ensure quality assurance monitoring takes place and is evidenced.

The SMT are also responsible for setting Quality Assurance Business Objectives, Vision and Values statements and providing updates, examining trends and produce reports at Monthly, Quarterly and Annual Management Reviews.

The SMT are responsible for adhering to the regulatory bodies requirements, i.e. CQC and RQIA

All staff within SOS Medical are made aware of their responsibility to work to our internal policies and procedures and assist in the process of continuous improvement.

Healthcare Workers

All healthcare workers undertaking shifts on behalf of SOS Medical Staffing are made aware of the company’s expectations of performance and quality.

All registered staff are expected to adhere to their relevant Code of Conduct pertaining to their job role.

All NMC registrants must commit to uphold the standards outlined in the NMC Code which are a series of statements under the four headings of Prioritise People, Practise Effectively, Preserve Safety and Promote Professionalism and Trust; all of which promote high quality of care being delivered to patients

Staff will be offered feedback forms, as SOS Medical Staffing value the opinions of employees and aim to provide them with a safe, working environment which listens to its staff.

5.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM

CLIENTS

Upon undertaking contracts with a new Trust, SOS Medical will visit to establish the structure and anticipate requirements and ensure we have sufficient staff to handle bookings within KPI timescales. (Addendum: With regard to Covid Restrictions, this will be conducted by phone or virtual meeting until lifted)

This enables us to manage a pool of nurses with the right specialisms/grade to meet requirements locally. We then establish 'Approval to hire' protocols and ensure we maintain a list of Authorised Officers.

This list is reviewed monthly to ensure that it remains accurate and any attempted bookings from unauthorised persons are reported immediately. Our system will not allow bookings to be processed by anyone that are not authorised or without a PO number.

A full specification will be taken by phone, email or fax by the Account Manager.

The time of booking and response time is logged automatically to ensure SLA compliance and this forms part of the MI. A job profile and all essential/desirable criteria is requested to aid matching.

Once registered, vetted and ready to work, our nurses are requested to keep us appraised of their availability on a daily basis, so we know immediately if we can fulfil a booking.

We can often confirm if we can fulfil a booking immediately and have an average response time of less than 15 minutes across nursing vacancies. Once a booking is accepted, we produce a shortlist of matching nurses (based on grade, location, WTR compliance, qualifications, recent work history and experience), and contact them to confirm availability and interest.

We then match the most suitable nurse against the job description, provide them with a detailed briefing, confirm their commitment to the job in writing and submit their profile (name, NI no, grade, specialism, training & qualifications, experience, GMC/RGN/NMC & DBS registration numbers, OH testing results, immunisation dates and any other information required).

We also keep 2 further nurses on standby wherever possible to enable us to backfill quickly if there are any issues.

We agree a timescale within which we will submit the selected candidate's details and maintain contact with the Authorised Officer every 15 minutes to with the status of the booking.

The Authorised Officer will accept/reject the nurse and will often provide a reference number to be quoted on subsequent timesheets/invoices. Any fulfilment issues are logged & communicated immediately.

The nurse receives the job profile and a client specific induction pack in writing and we also discuss the duties, special skills required, team fit, culture and work environment in detail. They are also briefed about uniform/dress, health & safety information/risks, location, parking and who to report to and are asked to confirm in writing that they have received and understood this information.

Prior to assignment the nurses file is audited by our Compliance Manager to ensure they meet legislative, framework and call off contract requirements.

A log of all activity is maintained to provide a breakdown of requirements, response times, vacancy fulfilment and proof of induction for MI, quality and audit purposes.

On the 1st day we phone the Authorised Officer to confirm the arrival of the nurse (and if necessary backfill the booking within 2 hours).

Further calls are made at the end of the 1st day, after the 1st week and then monthly to ensure the nurse continues to perform well and to resolve any issues.

In addition to this monitoring process, written evaluation relating to punctuality, attitude, professional competence and clinical performance is obtained monthly to underpin each nurses review & appraisal process.

Appraisals are carried out annually with a six month review, unless required more frequently as in the case of new starters.

On completion of the assignment we also request end of placement feedback and if not received within 5 working days we will send a series of prompts to ensure this is obtained.

This is kept on file and fed back to the nurse to aid continuous improvement and recognition.

STAFF

All staff will document that they have read, understood and adhered to all SOS Medical Staffing policies. This will be monitored monthly to ensure all staff work towards SOS Medical Staffing's objectives.

Staff will be offered the opportunity to contribute via a Staff Feedback Form and through the Appraisal & Performance pre-appraisal form.

Any concerns raised by staff will be forwarded to the Nurse Manager for actioning and reported back to the SMT at each monthly meeting. Should any policies and procedures need to be amended due to staff feedback it will be discussed at the SMT Monthly meeting and any changes will be agreed and made.

6.0 MONITORING METHODS

Monitoring will take place via several different methods, listed below.

To ensure service standards are being met, SOS has policies and procedures on all aspects of quality assurance monitoring. This is facilitated through service visits, telephone quality calls, spot checks and in-house monitoring through quality assessment feedback forms and audits.

- **Monitoring Visits**

A visit will be requested for each site quarterly unless required, and will be carried out by a Manager of SOS Medical Staffing. The visit provides an opportunity for the SOS Medical Staffing to monitor the quality of the service being provided in the care home by staff supplied.

If the Client has informed SOS Medical of any issues, or if staff have raised concerns or suggestions for improvement, the manager undertaking the visit may wish to explore these aspects of the service provided.

Please note:

Due to Covid-19 Restrictions, visits will be replaced by the offer of a 'virtual meeting' via video link until restrictions are lifted. Conversations will be documented and a copy of the meeting notes will be forwarded to the client and a copy will be stored on the shared drive.

- **Complaints monitoring**

Complaints are logged and reviewed at the SMT Monthly Review Meeting. Any trends will be identified and actioned.

Incidents and accidents will be logged and reviewed at the Monthly SMT meeting to identify trends and Implement training needs for staff or communications with Clients.

- **Policies, Procedures & Practices**

Review of policies, procedures and practices in light of changing legislation and reflection of good practice as advised by appropriate authorities or multidisciplinary body. These will be discussed at the monthly SMT Meeting and actioned.

- **MHRA Alerts**

All MHRA alerts will be accessible to staff on the SOS Medical website for their information. They will also be placed on the shared drive.

- **Satisfaction surveys**

Client Feedback forms and Staff Feedback forms and appraisals. SOS Medical will continually assess personnel and process performance trends, documenting findings. SOS will then

compare data against current practices, acquire any additional information and formulate a plan providing feedback and improvement recommendations to Clients.

- Further consultation mechanism such as meetings with service user will be offered but due to Covid restrictions will take place via Video Call or telephone.
- **Policy Review:**

Regular reviews and updating of policies and procedures will take place in light of any changing legislation.

Other monitoring forms:

- ❖ Client and staff feedback forms
- ❖ Complaints audit
- ❖ Monthly Monitoring Reports
- ❖ Health & Safety audits – Including Staff Accident Forms
- ❖ Mandatory training compliances
- ❖ Staff Development including
- ❖ Appraisals and Mandatory Training Rates
- ❖ NMC issues and revalidation

7.0 Monthly Monitoring Report for Nursing Quality Assurance

All quality assurance audits and monitoring will be fed back to the Senior Management Team at the monthly meeting.

Issues and trends will be addressed and actioned prior to the next SMT meeting. Any actions that require escalation will do so at the point of notification.

8.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed in line with changing governance and legislation, or minimally annually.