

Ambucar Mariner Medical Services Ltd

AmbuCar Transport Services Ltd

Inspection report

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This report describes our judgement of the quality of care at this service. It is based on a combination of what we found when we inspected, information from our ongoing monitoring of data about services and information given to us from the provider, patients, the public and other organisations.

Ratings

Overall rating for this location

Inadequate



Are services safe?

Inadequate



Are services effective?

Inadequate



Are services caring?

Insufficient evidence to rate



Are services responsive to people's needs?

Inadequate



Are services well-led?

Inadequate



Summary of findings

Overall summary

Following our inspection on the 16 June 2022, the provider has cancelled their registration with the Care Quality Commission to provide regulated activities associated with the trade name and is no longer operating as an organisation.

The registered manager of the service has deregistered and is no longer providing any regulated activities at the above location.

Summary of findings

Our judgements about each of the main services

Service

Patient transport services

Rating

Inadequate



Summary of each main service

We have not previously inspected this service. We rated the service inadequate.

- Staff training in key skills could not be evidenced. There was no evidence to determine if staff understood how to protect patients from abuse and manage safety well. There was no evidence infection prevention control processes were in place. Staff did not have a risk assessment system or keep care records. The service did not have a safety incident management system in place.
- The registered manager did not monitor effectiveness of the service or have a system in place to make sure staff were competent.
- We did not speak with any staff or patients or see any patient transport vehicles.
- The service did not have a feedback or complaints system.
- The registered manager did not run the service using reliable information systems or support staff to develop their skills.
- The registered manager did not have governance system in place.

Summary of findings

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Summary of this inspection

Background to AmbuCar Transport Services Ltd

We inspected this service; however, we could not find any evidence during inspection to determine whether they met the requirements set out in the regulations. The registered manager has since deregistered the service.

The provider, Ambucar Transport Services Ltd, (Ambucar) was a limited company. However, they changed their name to Ambucar Mariner Medical Services Limited, on 3 July 2019. There was an office location based in Southend-on-Sea, Essex. Although Ambucar Mariner Medical Services Limited had been running for 2 years, they were registered with CQC (Care Quality Commission) as Ambucar Transport Services Ltd.

They were a non-emergency ambulance car service, registered to provide transport services, triage and medical advice provided remotely.

They provided transportation for NHS (National Health Service) Trust patients, clinics, repatriation and transporting people that required transportation above a non-medical car service. The service included transporting people travelling with their own wheelchair.

They transported people with low dependency needs including mobility issues to hospital, clinics, and home.

They provided services to the full range age group including children and older patients.

How we carried out this inspection

You can find information about how we carry out our inspections on our website: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/what-we-do/how-we-do-our-job/what-we-do-inspection>.

Areas for improvement

Following our inspection, the service deregistered. Therefore, no enforcement action.

Our findings

Overview of ratings

Our ratings for this location are:

	Safe	Effective	Caring	Responsive	Well-led	Overall
Patient transport services	Inadequate	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence to rate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate
Overall	Inadequate	Inadequate	Insufficient evidence to rate	Inadequate	Inadequate	Inadequate

Patient transport services

Safe	Inadequate 
Effective	Inadequate 
Caring	Insufficient evidence to rate 
Responsive	Inadequate 
Well-led	Inadequate 

Are Patient transport services safe?

Inadequate 

We have not previously inspected this service. We rated safe as inadequate.

Mandatory training

The service could not evidence mandatory training in key skills to all staff or make sure everyone completed it.

Staff did not receive or keep up to date with mandatory training. The registered manager did not have a mandatory training system. There were no training schedules with listed mandatory training requirements or records to show which mandatory training was or should be completed. The registered manager could not tell us which mandatory training should be completed.

Safeguarding

The registered manager did not have a system to determine if staff understood how to protect patients from abuse. Staff did not have regular and relevant training on how to recognise and report abuse.

The registered manager told us staff received training specific for their role on how to recognise and report abuse. However, could not provide any evidence to support this. We could not speak with any staff to determine their understanding.

The registered manager told us they were unclear whether staff transported children.

The registered manager could not tell us how to make a safeguarding referral and who to inform if they had concerns.

Cleanliness, infection control and hygiene

The service could not evidence infection prevention risks were controlled. We did not see any vehicles or where they were kept, or whether equipment, vehicles and the premises were cleaned.

We asked to see clinical areas to determine if they were clean or had suitable furnishings which were clean and well-maintained. The registered manager told us there were no clinical areas and that staff kept their vehicles and equipment, for example, personal protective equipment at home.

Patient transport services

We did not see any cleaning records that demonstrated that areas were cleaned regularly.

We asked to speak to staff to review infection control principles including the use of personal protective equipment. The registered manager told us we could not speak with staff and could not provide any other evidence to demonstrate infection control principles were followed.

We asked to speak with staff to determine if equipment was cleaned after patient contact and equipment was labelled to show when it was last cleaned. The registered manager told us we were unable to speak with staff and could not provide us with evidence to demonstrate equipment was cleaned after each contact.

Environment and equipment

The premises were not set up to store vehicles or equipment. The registered manager told us that staff kept their vehicles at home. There was no system in place for managing clinical waste. The registered manager told us staff disposed of clinical waste ad hoc at hospitals visited.

We asked to speak with staff or observe them to check if they carried out daily safety checks of specialist equipment. The registered manager told us we were unable to speak with staff to help us make this judgement.

The service did not have suitable facilities to meet the needs of patients' families. There were no facilities at the location.

We could not determine if the service had enough suitable equipment to help them to safely care for patients. We did not see any staff or vehicles to make this judgement.

Assessing and responding to patient risk

Staff did not complete risk assessments for each patient. Staff did not have access to a system to identify or act upon patients at risk of deterioration.

We asked to speak with staff to determine if they responded promptly to any sudden deterioration in a patient's health. The registered manager told us we could not speak with staff to help us determine if they understood how to respond to keep people safe.

The registered manager told us that staff did not complete risk assessments for each patient.

The registered manager could not provide evidence to assure us that staff shared key information to keep patients safe when handing over their care to others.

Staffing

The service could not evidence if they had enough staff with the right qualifications, skills, training and experience to keep patients safe from avoidable harm and to provide the right care and treatment.

The registered manager could not provide evidence of a tool used to calculate and review the number of staff needed for each shift in accordance with national guidance.

The registered manager told us they had an informal system to determine how many staff were needed to respond to workload. The registered manager received job allocation by email then used the telephone to allocate work to staff. There were no records available for us to review to assure us that there were appropriate numbers of staff.

Patient transport services

Records

Staff did not keep any records of patients care and treatment. We did not see any records.

There were no patient records at the providers location. We were told that records were not completed.

Incidents

The service did not have a patient safety incident system. The registered managers told us they did not have a system to identify, record or manage safety incidents.

We asked to speak to staff to determine if they knew what incidents to report and how to report them. The registered manager told us we could not speak with staff to evidence this.

The registered manager told us staff raised concerns over the telephone and they were dealt with informally. We asked to see the incident reporting system used and was told there was no formal incident reporting or recording system in place.

The registered manager did not provide evidence of a system to share learning with their staff about incidents.

We asked to speak with staff to determine if they understood the duty of candour. The registered manager told us we could not speak with staff to evidence this.

We asked to speak with staff to determine if they met to discuss the feedback and look at improvements to patient care. The registered manager told us that we were unable to speak with staff and there was no process or system in place to discuss feedback and look at improvements to patient care.

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Are Patient transport services effective?

Inadequate 

We have not previously inspected this service. We rated effective as inadequate.

Evidence-based care and treatment

The service did not provide care and treatment based on national guidance and evidence-based practice. The registered manager did not check to make sure staff followed guidance.

We asked to see evidence of guidance in place for staff to follow. The provider was unable to provide evidence and we were unable to speak with staff to determine what, if any, guidance they followed.

We asked to speak to staff to determine if they followed policies to plan and deliver high quality care according to best practice and national guidance.

We were unable to establish if staff protected the rights of patients subject to the Mental Health Act and followed the Code of Practice.

Patient transport services

Nutrition and hydration

We had no evidence of staff assessing patients' food and drink requirements to meet their needs during a journey.

We asked to speak with staff to assess whether they made sure patients had enough to eat and drink, including those with specialist nutrition and hydration needs. The registered manager told us that staff kept a supply of bottles of water in their vehicles and could not provide any other evidence to demonstrate compliance.

Response times

The service did not monitor response times so that they could facilitate good outcomes for patients.

The registered manager confirmed they did not monitor response times.

Competent staff

The service did not make sure staff were competent for their roles. The registered manager did not appraise staff work performance or hold supervision meetings with them to provide support and development.

We asked to speak with staff to assess if they were experienced, qualified or had the right skills and knowledge to meet the needs of patients. The registered manager told us we were unable to speak with any staff.

The registered manager told us they gave staff a full induction tailored to their role before they started work. However, we did not see comprehensive evidence of this outside a standard checklist in a personnel file. We were unable to speak with any staff to assure ourselves that staff received a full induction.

The registered manager told us they did not support staff to develop through yearly, constructive appraisals of their work or regular clinical supervision.

The registered manager told us there were no team meetings.

The registered manager did not have a system to identify any training needs their staff needed to give them an opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge.

The registered manager could not provide evidence of specialist training for staff to fulfil their role.

The registered manager could not provide any evidence that they identified poor staff performance promptly and supported staff to improve.

Multidisciplinary working

There was no evidence of any multi-disciplinary working.

The registered manager told us they did not hold regular and effective multidisciplinary meetings to discuss patients and improve their care.

Patient transport services

Consent, Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

There was no evidence that staff supported patients to make informed decisions about their care and treatment or that they followed national guidance to gain patients' consent.

We did not speak with staff to evidence their understanding of how and when to assess whether a patient had the capacity to make decisions about their care.

We saw no evidence that staff gained consent from patients for their care and treatment in line with legislation and guidance. The registered manager told us they did not maintain records to demonstrate how consent was obtained, either written or verbally.

Are Patient transport services caring?

Insufficient evidence to rate 

We have not previously inspected this service. We were unable to rate caring as we could not gather enough evidence.

Compassionate care

There was no evidence that staff treated patients with compassion and kindness, respected their privacy and dignity, and took account of their individual needs.

We did not speak with any staff, patients, carers or anyone who used the service. This meant we could not evidence if staff were discreet and responsive when caring for patients.

Patients did not provide feedback to the service. This meant we could not evidence if staff treated them well and with kindness.

We had no evidence to suggest staff followed policy to keep patient care and treatment confidential.

Emotional support

There was no evidence that staff provided emotional support to patients, families and carers to minimise their distress or, that they understood patients' personal, cultural and religious needs.

We did not speak with staff or see any care given to patients. This meant we had no evidence if staff provided emotional support and advice when they needed it.

Understanding and involvement of patients and those close to them

There was no evidence that staff supported patients, families, and carers to understand their condition and make decisions about their care and treatment.

We did not speak with staff or see any evidence that staff made sure patients and those close to them understood their care and treatment.

Patients did not have access to a feedback system to provide positive feedback about the service.

Patient transport services

Are Patient transport services responsive?

Inadequate 

We have not previously inspected this service. We rated responsive as inadequate.

Service delivery to meet the needs of local people

There was no evidence that the service planned and provided care in a way that met the needs of local people and the communities served.

The registered manager did not plan or organise services so they met the changing needs of the local population. The registered manager told us they took unplanned transfers on an informal basis.

Meeting people's individual needs

There was no evidence to suggest the service was inclusive and took account of patients' individual needs and preferences.

We asked to speak with staff to evidence if they understood and applied the policy on meeting the information and communication needs of patients with a disability or sensory loss. The registered manager told us we could not speak with staff.

The service did not have information leaflets available in languages spoken by the patients and local community.

The registered manager did not provide staff, and patients, loved ones and carers with help from interpreters or signers when needed.

Access and flow

There was no evidence to suggest people could access the service when they needed it, in line with national standards, and that right care was received in a timely way.

The registered manager did not have a system to monitor waiting times and make sure patients could access services when needed and received treatment within agreed timeframes and national targets.

The registered manager could not provide evidence that they worked to keep the number of cancelled appointments to a minimum. The registered manager could not provide us with evidence of a system to demonstrate this.

Learning from complaints and concerns

There was no system for people to give feedback or raise concerns about care received.

The registered manager told us that patients, relatives and carers did not have a system to complain other than verbally to staff.

We asked to speak to staff to determine if they understood how to process complaints or how to handle them. The registered manager told us they investigated complaints on an informal basis. There were no systems in place to document complaints or look for themes to help with learning.

Patient transport services

Are Patient transport services well-led?

Inadequate 

We have not previously inspected this service. We rated well-led as inadequate.

Leadership

The leader could not demonstrate the skills and abilities needed to run the service. They did not understand and manage priorities and issues the service faced.

There was no evidence to suggest the registered manager was visible and approachable in the service for patients and staff.

We asked the registered manager to provide evidence that staff were supported. The registered manager was unable to provide evidence.

Due to the lack of systems and processes in place to support staff to deliver the service, the registered manager was unable to demonstrate they had the skills and abilities to run the service. They were unable to articulate what the priorities were for the service or what issues they faced and how they managed them.

Vision and Strategy

The service did not have a vision for what it wanted to achieve or a strategy to turn it into action.

The registered manager did not understand how to sustain the service in line with the local plans and the wider health economy. . There was no vision or strategy to support the staff to deliver the aims of the service.

Governance

Leaders did not have governance processes.

The registered manager was unable to provide information we requested. For example, to evidence risk systems and processes, outcome measures to demonstrate performance, audit information or learning. There were no systems to demonstrate or evidence ways of working in line with local or national guidance.

Management of risk, issues, and performance

Leaders did not have systems to manage performance. They were no system to identify and escalate risks. There were no plans to cope with unexpected events.

We asked how risk was managed and mitigated. The registered manager was unable to articulate how this was managed and confirmed there were no risk assessments or risk register in place. There was no system in place to manage performance or plans to cope with unexpected events.

Information Management

The service did not collect data or analyse it. Data or notifications were not submitted to external organisations.

Patient transport services

The registered manager told us they did not collect data or submit notifications. We asked to see evidence of a system for data collection and the registered manager was unable to provide us with this.

Engagement

There was no evidence of leaders and staff actively and openly engaged with patients, staff, equality groups, the public and local organisations to plan and manage services. They did not collaborate with partner organisations to help improve services for patients.

The registered manager told us any engagement with other providers was on an informal basis. The registered manager told us they did not engage or collaborate formally with any external groups or organisations to help improve services.