

Mountain Healthcare Limited Bridge House SARC

Inspection Report

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Overall summary

We carried out this announced inspection of Bridge House SARC on 23 December 2019 under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 as part of our regulatory functions. This inspection took place to check whether the registered provider had met the requirements of an urgent Notice of Decision (NoD) we served; to impose a condition on the registered provider after the initial inspection on 26 and 27 November 2019.

The inspection on 23 December was carried out by a CQC inspector and focussed on the question of whether the location was Safe, one of the five key questions in the CQC's regulatory framework.

Background

Bridge House SARC is a sexual assault referral centre (SARC). The SARC provides health services and forensic medical examinations to patients aged 16 and over in North Yorkshire who have experienced sexual violence or sexual abuse.

The SARC occupies part of a two-storey building owned by North Yorkshire Police, which is used for other purposes as well as the SARC. The centre is located on the first floor of the premises and there is a single entrance to the building. There is a small staff office and one forensic examination suite. Further details on the layout of the building can be found in the report of the previous inspection in November 2019.

Bridge House SARC is jointly commissioned by NHS England and the Police and Crime Commissioner. Staff were on site during core working hours and attended the SARC during the on-call period, from 5pm to 8am. Mountain Healthcare operates a call centre that provides a 24 hours-a-day and seven days-a-week advice service for patients.

At the time of this inspection the staff team included a centre manager, Forensic Nurse Examiners (FNEs) and crisis workers who also took on administrative duties.

The service is provided by a limited company, Mountain Healthcare Limited. As a condition of their registration the company must have a person registered with the Care Quality Commission as a registered manager. Registered managers have legal responsibility for meeting the requirements on the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and associated regulations about how the service is run. The registered manager at Bridge House SARC was also the medical director for Mountain Healthcare Limited.

During our previous inspection of 26 and 27 November 2019, we found a number of concerns in the safety of the service. The Care Quality Commission served an urgent Notice of Decision on 29 November 2019 under section 31 of the Social Care Act 2008, to impose conditions the registered provider must not provide regulated activities without the prior written agreement of the Care Quality Commission and until fire safety systems and processes had been implemented in the building.

Summary of findings

The provider subsequently submitted an action plan outlining the areas and actions they would take to address the concerns, along with supporting documents and photographs. We reviewed these in advance of our visit on 23 December 2019.

During our visit on 23 December 2019 we spoke with the registered manager, the forensic nurse examiner and the chief executive officer. We also reviewed additional documents whilst on site and carried out observations of the physical environment.

We found sufficient evidence to show that the requirements of the NoD had been met. We removed the urgent conditions on the providers' registration as a service provider in respect of a regulated activities.

Summary of findings

The five questions we ask about services and what we found

We asked the following question(s).

Are services safe?

We found that this service had complied with the requirements of the Notice of Decision that was served following our previous inspection and was providing safe care in accordance with the relevant regulations.

No action



Are services effective?

Not considered in this inspection.

Are services caring?

Not considered in this inspection.

Are services responsive to people's needs?

Not considered in this inspection.

Are services well-led?

Not considered in this inspection.

Are services safe?

Our findings

Premises and equipment

We carried out a previous, comprehensive inspection of Bridge House SARC on 26 and 27 November 2019 using our powers under Section 60 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 and as part of our regulatory functions.

During that inspection we had found a number of concerns in respect of the safety of the service in the event of a fire.

These were as follows:

- Lack of fire equipment and ineffective fire risk assessments in relation to the impact of the lack of equipment on fire safety or the provider's ability to protect people using the SARC from harm or exposure to the risk of harm.
- Failure to monitor the fire risk assessment and any subsequent actions to be taken by the landlord to make the first floor safe to use. There was no evidence of action taken to monitor whether the work was being or had been done.
- Ineffective procedures for evacuations from the building in the event of a fire. A fire evacuation drill had not been carried out. There was a lack of oversight or monitoring actions taken in relation to this.
- Limited assurances on the safety of employees and any visitors to the premises from the dangers of fire. Mountain Healthcare Limited had a general fire policy; however the provider did not have a fire policy specific to this location.
- No assurances as to whether staff understood the fire safety procedures to evacuate the premises or how to operate the fire alarm system in the event of a fire emergency in the building.

Following the inspection, we served the provider with an urgent Notice of Decision under section 31 of the Social Care Act 2008. This notice imposed a condition on the provider that prevented them from carrying out regulated activities at the location without the prior written agreement of the Care Quality Commission. The notice required Mountain Healthcare Limited to provide evidence that fire safety systems and processes had been implemented in the building before that condition could be lifted.

The provider subsequently sent us an action plan within 72 hours with supporting documents and photographic evidence. They told us that they had made significant improvements in the safety processes and that they had mitigated the risks arising from the shortfalls we had found.

On 23 December 2019, we carried out an announced visit to Bridge House SARC. The purpose of this visit was to validate the action plan and the evidence the provider had submitted and to assess whether the requirements of the notice had been met.

We reviewed a number of key documents and pieces of photographic evidence in relation to the location, spoke with registered manager, forensic nurse examiner and the chief executive officer and carried out observations of the physical environment.

We reviewed the following documents:

- The provider's 8-point action plan designed to meet the concerns in the Notice of Decision served on 29 November 2019.
- A fire risk assessment carried out on the building by the North Yorkshire Police's health and safety officer.
- Published HM Government guidance entitled 'A short guide to making your premises safe from fire'; Regulatory (Fire Safety) Reform Order 2005, publish government guidance.
- Email records from 18 members staff to confirm they had read and understood the updated fire procedure for Bridge House SARC.
- New fire risk assessments undertaken by both North Yorkshire Police and Mountain Healthcare Limited with details of the actions completed and agreed dates for any future actions.
- Updated fire evacuation plans and revised fire signage.
- Revised fire policy specific to Bridge House SARC including the location of window keys.
- New fire orders/evacuation plans with a building plan jointly written by Mountain Healthcare Limited and North Yorkshire Police.
- A fire safety folder prominently displayed in the kitchen containing the policy and procedures about fire safety in the building, including information on what staff should do if the fire alarm sounds.
- The health and safety folder in the SARC office containing the fire policy and procedures and the fire risk assessment.

Are services safe?

The North Yorkshire Police's health and safety officer had carried out an assessment of fire safety in the premises as there was only one single exit out of the building. To ratify that windows were a satisfactory means of escape on the upper floor they had measured the travel distance between the furthest point in the premises to the nearest place of safety outside the building and found it to be less than 18m as required by the Regulatory (Fire Safety) Reform Order 2005.

We saw the configuration of the office window and the placement of a window key to enable patients and staff to be evacuated by the office window, which itself was protected by a fire door.

The forensic nurse examiner confirmed they had been advised of the new fire procedures. They told us that she and staff who worked at the Bridge House SARC knew they had to remain in the office behind the fire door and could open the window fully using the key which was prominently in sight. We tested this and found that it worked as it should.

The registered manager told us they had reiterated to staff what they were required to do in the event of a fire emergency. They confirmed that staff would not be permitted to work at this location if they were not trained in the specific fire procedures. We also discussed the information the provider had communicated to the staff about the new fire risk assessments and the fire procedures which were to be tested by scheduled drills in February 2020. In addition, there were plans to schedule fire safety once a week every to make certain that learning was fully embedded.

Leaders assured us that the evacuation plan was shared with Mountain Healthcare Limited call centre, and by email with all the staff team who worked at this location. We saw evidence of email confirmation from staff they had read and understood the procedures.

We checked the physical layout of the premises and found the replacement of two fire extinguishers installed near the front door and the acquisition of a fire blanket in the kitchen.

Evacuation plans were displayed in all rooms including the forensic examination suite. The building plan was posted on view in the hallway near the front door with a copy held in the fire safety folder.

Clear fire signage was erected above the doors in the office and forensic waiting room.

The importance of the governance of fire safety had been placed as an agenda item for contract review meetings. An agreement had been made between Mountain Healthcare Limited and the North Yorkshire Police that any changes to the fire procedures and fire equipment in the building would be shared and communicated on site and during review meetings to make certain that actions were implemented.

We were assured that actions and the measures taken by the provider were sufficient to manage the fire risks effectively. The Care Quality Commission were satisfied that patients at Bridge House SARC were no longer exposed to the risk of harm and therefore removed the urgent condition imposed on 29 November 2019.

This section is primarily information for the provider

Enforcement actions

Action we have told the provider to take

The table below shows the legal requirements that were not being met. The provider must send CQC a report that says what action they are going to take to meet these requirements.

Regulated activity	Regulation
	<p>Regulation 12 HSCA (RA) Regulations 2014 Safe care and treatment</p> <p>We issued a Notice of Decision to remove the urgent conditions on the registration as a service provider in respect of a regulated activities. under section 12(5) of the Health and Social Care Act 2008.</p>