

Trade association launches clinical and healthcare compliance standards to support better recruitment practices

Submitted by: BlueSky Public Relations Ltd

Wednesday, 29 June 2022

The Association of Professional Staffing Companies (APSCo) has today launched a new best practice standard for the clinical and healthcare sector to support best practice hiring at an event in the House of Lords.

The Compliance+ accreditation – constructed following extensive consultation with recruitment firms and external stakeholders including NHS Professionals, NHS Workforce Alliance and Health Trust Europe (HTE) – has been produced to both safeguard vulnerable persons and benchmark recruiters against the highest service deliverables.

APSCo launched the new initiative following the success of its Education and Social Work recruitment Compliance+ standards. In order to become Compliance + accredited, staffing companies must pass a rigorous assessment process that is audited annually and demonstrate evidence that the firm is going above and beyond to provide clinical and healthcare employers with better-prepared, better-suited and better-trained candidates.

Compliance+ ensures recruiters are delivering more than the statutory safeguarding requirements, including:

Formally and publicly committing to safer recruitment for candidates and clients

Ensuring candidates on assignment have access to information on relevant subsidised training courses

Providing 24/7 support to candidates on assignment

Committing to work closely with the end client to ensure candidates have everything needed ahead of a placement including staff handbooks

Ann Swain, CEO of APSCo commented:

“The clinical and healthcare sector in the UK has been under immense strain for some time, a scenario that was pushed to breaking point during the pandemic. While Brexit certainly exacerbated the skills shortages, the profession has faced talent challenges for many years and the nature of the sector means that urgent and temporary demands often outstrip supply. In fact, Skills for Care has previously reported

that the adult social care sector in England needed to fill around 112,000 job vacancies in any given day. One of the greatest challenges in this highly regulated space is finding staff quickly and compliantly – without over-inflated costs from off-framework providers. That's where our new Compliance+ accreditation will improve recruitment practices across clinical and healthcare."

Shazia Imtiaz, General Counsel at APSCo was involved in the creation of the Compliance + accreditation for the sector. She added:

"Our new accreditation sets the best quality standards, beyond the statutory safeguarding requirements, for recruitment businesses that operate in the clinical and healthcare sector. It establishes a compliance framework that safeguards vulnerable persons, and provides clients with safer, best suited, highest quality candidates. APSCo's new Compliance+ standard presents both candidates and clients with an easy-to-identify accreditation that verifies the recruitment partner they are working with is fully compliant, has been annually audited by an independent third party, meets all safeguarding requirements and will provide the best-in-class services."

Gary Snart, Sourcing Director, HealthTrust Europe LLP, added:

"Raising the bar on standards in compliance for healthcare remains both critical and fundamental to the delivery of safe patient care across the UK. Embedding robust policies, processes, governance, and auditing to ensure employment checks, safeguarding checks, mandatory training, counter fraud, regulatory and contractual requirements of supply are consistently met, gives healthcare providers the assurance and confidence they need to engage the supplier community openly. We embrace all initiatives that aim to improve quality standards and reduce risk in support of healthcare partners."

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