

ENSIGN GROUP, INC
Form S-3ASR
July 15, 2014

As filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission on July 15, 2014
Registration No. 333-
UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM S-3
REGISTRATION STATEMENT
UNDER

THE SECURITIES ACT OF 1933
THE ENSIGN GROUP, INC.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware

33-0861263

(State or other jurisdiction of incorporation or
organization)

(I.R.S. Employer Identification Number)

27101 Puerta Real, Suite 450

Mission Viejo, CA 92691

(949) 487-9500

(Address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of registrant's principal executive offices)

Chad A. Keetch

Executive Vice President and Secretary

The Ensign Group, Inc.

27101 Puerta Real, Suite 450

Mission Viejo, CA 92691

(949) 487-9500

(Name, address, including zip code, and telephone number, including area code, of agent for service)

With a copy to:

Jonathan L. Friedman, Esq.

Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

300 South Grand Avenue

Los Angeles, California 90071

(213) 687-5000

Approximate date of commencement of proposed sale to the public: From time to time after the effective date of this registration statement

If the only securities being registered on this Form are being offered pursuant to dividend or interest reinvestment plans, please check the following box.

If any of the securities being registered on this Form are to be offered on a delayed or continuous basis pursuant to Rule 415 under the Securities Act of 1933, other than securities offered only in connection with dividend or interest reinvestment plans, check the following box.

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If this Form is filed to register additional securities for an offering pursuant to Rule 462(b) under the Securities Act, please check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment filed pursuant to Rule 462(c) under the Securities Act, check the following box and list the Securities Act registration statement number of the earlier effective registration statement for the same offering.

If this Form is a registration statement pursuant to General Instruction I.D. or a post-effective amendment thereto that shall become effective upon filing with the Commission pursuant to Rule 462(e) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

If this Form is a post-effective amendment to a registration statement filed pursuant to General Instruction I.D. filed to register additional securities or additional classes of securities pursuant to Rule 413(b) under the Securities Act, check the following box.

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of “large accelerated filer,” “accelerated filer” and “smaller reporting company” in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act. (Check one):

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer
 Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company
 (Do not check if a smaller reporting company)

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of each class of securities to be registered(1)	Amount to be registered(2)	Proposed maximum offering price per unit(2)	Proposed maximum aggregate offering price(2)	Amount of registration fee(2)
Common Stock				
Preferred Stock				
Warrants				

(1) Securities registered hereunder may be sold separately, together or as units with other securities registered hereunder.

(2) Information not required, as the registrant is registering an unspecified amount of securities of each identified class, and is electing to defer payment of the registration fee in reliance on Rules 456(b) and 457(r) under the Securities Act.

PROSPECTUS

THE ENSIGN GROUP, INC.
COMMON STOCK
PREFERRED STOCK
WARRANTS

The Ensign Group, Inc. may offer, issue and sell, from time to time in one or more offerings, any combination of common stock, preferred stock and warrants on terms to be determined at the time of offering.

This prospectus describes some of the general terms that may apply to these securities. Each time we sell securities, we will provide the specific prices and terms of such securities in one or more supplements to this prospectus at the time of the offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read this prospectus and the accompanying prospectus supplement carefully before you make your investment decision.

We may offer and sell these securities through underwriters, dealers or agents or directly to purchasers, on a continuous or delayed basis. The prospectus supplement for each offering will describe in detail the plan of distribution for that offering and will set forth the names of any underwriters, dealers or agents involved in the offering and any applicable fees, commissions or discount arrangements.

This prospectus may not be used to sell securities unless accompanied by a prospectus supplement or a free writing prospectus.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the trading symbol "ENSG." Each prospectus supplement will indicate if the securities offered thereby will be listed on any securities exchange.

Investing in our securities involves risks. See "Risk Factors" on page 2 before you make your investment decision.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus or the accompanying prospectus supplement is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is July 15, 2014.

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ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of an automatic shelf registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the “SEC”). Under this shelf process, we may sell, from time to time, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings.

This prospectus only provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time that securities are offered, a prospectus supplement containing specific information about the terms of that offering will be provided, including the specific amounts, prices and terms of the securities offered. The prospectus supplement may also add to, update or change information contained in this prospectus or that we have incorporated by reference into this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and any other offering material (including any free writing prospectus) prepared by us or on our behalf for a specific offering of securities, together with the additional information described under “Where You Can Find More Information.”

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We are not making an offer to sell these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer or sale is not permitted.

This prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement do not contain all of the information included in the registration statement as permitted by the rules and regulations of the SEC. For further information, we refer you to the registration statement on Form S-3, including its exhibits. We are subject to the informational requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the “Exchange Act”), and, therefore, file reports and other information with the SEC. Statements contained in this prospectus and any accompanying prospectus supplement about the provisions or contents of any agreement or other document are only summaries. If SEC rules require that any agreement or document be filed as an exhibit to the registration statement, you should refer to that agreement or document for its complete contents.

You should not assume that the information in this prospectus or any prospectus supplement is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of each document. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since then.

In this prospectus, unless otherwise specified or the context requires otherwise, the words, “Company,” “we,” “our” and “us” refer to The Ensign Group, Inc. and its consolidated subsidiaries.

The Ensign Group, Inc. is a holding company with no direct operating assets, employees or revenues. All of our skilled nursing and assisted living facilities, home health and hospice operations, urgent care centers and majority owned subsidiaries are operated by separate, wholly-owned, independent subsidiaries, each of which have their own management, employees and assets. In addition, one of our wholly-owned independent subsidiaries (the “Service Center”), provides centralized accounting, payroll, human resources, information technology, legal, risk management and other centralized services to the other operating subsidiaries through contractual relationships with such subsidiaries. In addition, we have a wholly-owned captive insurance subsidiary (the “Captive”) that provides some claims-made coverage to our operating subsidiaries for general and professional liability, as well as for certain workers’ compensation insurance liabilities.

Like our operations, the Service Center and Captive are operated by separate, wholly-owned, independent subsidiaries that have their own management, employees and assets. Reference herein to the consolidated “Company” and “its” assets and activities, as well as the use of the terms “we,” “us,” “our” and similar verbiage in this prospectus is not meant to imply that The Ensign Group, Inc. has direct operating assets, employees or revenue, or that any of the facilities, the Service Center or the Captive are operated by the same entity.

THE COMPANY

We, through our subsidiaries, are a provider of skilled nursing and rehabilitative care services. As of July 11, 2014, we operated 126 facilities, ten home health and nine hospice operations, twelve urgent care centers and a mobile x-ray and diagnostic company, located in Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Nebraska, Nevada, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wisconsin. Our operations, each of which strives to be the operation of choice in the community it serves, provide a broad spectrum of healthcare services, including skilled nursing, assisted living, home

health and hospice, mobile ancillary, and urgent care services.

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On June 1, 2014, the Company completed the separation of its healthcare business and its real estate business into two separate and independent publicly traded companies through the distribution of all of the outstanding shares of common stock of CareTrust REIT, Inc. (“CareTrust”) to Ensign stockholders on a pro rata basis (the “Spin-Off”). Ensign stockholders received one share of CareTrust common stock for each share of Ensign common stock held at the close of business on May 22, 2014, the record date for the Spin-Off. Prior to the Spin-Off, the Company transferred 97 skilled nursing, assisted and independent living facilities to CareTrust. The Company continues to operate 94 of these facilities under multiple, long-term, triple-net leases with CareTrust.

We encourage and empower our leaders and staff to make their facility the “facility of choice” in the community it serves. This means that our leaders and staff are generally free to discern and address the unique needs and priorities of healthcare professionals, customers and other stakeholders in the local community or market, and then work to create a superior service offering and reputation for that particular community or market to encourage prospective customers and referral sources to choose or recommend the facility.

Our organizational structure is centered upon local leadership. We believe our organizational structure, which empowers leaders and staff at the local level, is unique within the healthcare services industry. Each of our operations is led by highly dedicated individuals who are responsible for key operational decisions at their facilities. Leaders and staff are trained and motivated to pursue superior clinical outcomes, high patient and family satisfaction, operating efficiencies and financial performance at their facilities. In addition, our leaders are enabled and motivated to share real-time operating data and otherwise benchmark clinical and operational performance against their peers in other facilities in order to improve clinical care, maximize patient satisfaction and augment operational efficiencies, promoting the sharing of best practices.

We view healthcare services primarily as a local business, influenced by personal relationships and community reputation. We believe our success is largely dependent upon our ability to build strong relationships with key stakeholders from the local healthcare community, based upon a solid foundation of reliably superior care.

Accordingly, our brand strategy is focused on encouraging the leaders and staff of each facility to focus on clinical excellence, and promote their facility independently within their local community.

Much of our historical growth can be attributed to our expertise in acquiring under-performing facilities and transforming them into market leaders in clinical quality, staff competency, employee loyalty and financial performance. We plan to continue to grow our revenue and earnings by:

- continuing to grow our talent base and develop future leaders;
- increasing the overall percentage or “skilled mix” of higher-acuity residents;
- focusing on organic growth and internal operating efficiencies;
- continuing to acquire additional strategic and turnaround facilities in existing and new markets; and
- expanding and renovating our existing facilities, and potentially constructing new facilities.

We were incorporated in 1999 in Delaware. Our principal executive offices are located at 27101 Puerta Real, Suite 450, Mission Viejo, CA 92691, and our telephone number is (949) 487-9500. Our corporate website is located at www.ensigngroup.net. The information contained in, or that can be accessed through, our website is not part of this prospectus and should not be relied upon in connection with making any investment decision with respect to the securities offered by this prospectus.

EnsignTM is our United States trademark. All other trademarks and trade names appearing in this prospectus are the property of their respective owners.

RISK FACTORS

You should consider the risks described in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013 and our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended March 31, 2014, the risk factors described under the caption “Risk Factors” in any applicable prospectus supplement and any risk factors set forth in our other filings with the SEC pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, before making an investment decision. See “Where You Can Find More Information.”

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless otherwise set forth in a prospectus supplement, we intend to use the net proceeds of any offering of securities for general corporate purposes.

RATIO OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS

The table below sets forth our consolidated ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the periods indicated. No shares of our preferred stock were outstanding during the periods indicated in the table below.

Three Months Ended	Fiscal Year Ended December 31,				
March 31, 2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009
5.7	3.6	5.0	5.2	5.7	6.0

For purposes of the ratio, “earnings” means our pre-tax income, less net loss attributable to noncontrolling interests, plus fixed charges, and “fixed charges” means the sum of interest in continuing operations, including amortization of debt discounts and fees and an estimate of the interest component of rent expense.

DESCRIPTION OF SECURITIES

This prospectus contains summary descriptions of the common stock, preferred stock or warrants that we may offer and sell from time to time. These summary descriptions are not meant to be complete descriptions of each security. At the time of an offering and sale, this prospectus together with the accompanying prospectus supplement will contain the material terms of the securities being offered.

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description of our capital stock and provisions of our certificate of incorporation and bylaws is only a summary. For a more complete understanding of these documents, you should refer to our certificate of incorporation and bylaws which have been filed or incorporated by reference as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part.

Our authorized capital stock consists of 75,000,000 shares of common stock, par value \$0.001 per share, and 1,000,000 shares of preferred stock, par value \$0.001 per share.

Common Stock

At July 11, 2014, 22,390,088 shares of common stock were outstanding and held of record by 207 holders. The holders of our common stock are entitled to one vote for each share held of record on all matters submitted to a vote of the stockholders, including the election of directors, and do not have cumulative voting rights. Accordingly, the holders of a majority of the shares of common stock entitled to vote in any election of directors can elect all of the directors standing for election, if they so choose. The shares of common stock offered by this prospectus, when issued, will be fully paid and non-assessable and will not be subject to any redemption or sinking fund provisions. The holders of our common stock do not have any preemptive, subscription or conversion rights.

The holders of our common stock are entitled to receive dividends declared by the board of directors out of legally available funds, subject to the rights of preferred stockholders, if any, and the terms of any existing or future agreements between us and our lenders. In the event of our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, common stockholders are entitled to share ratably in all assets legally available for distribution after payment of all debts and other liabilities, and subject to the prior rights of any holders of outstanding shares of preferred stock, if any.

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is Broadridge Corporate Issuer Solutions.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol “ENSG.”

Preferred Stock

As of July 11, 2014, there were no shares of preferred stock issued or outstanding.

The board of directors is authorized to issue from time to time up to an aggregate of 1,000,000 shares of preferred stock in one or more series and to fix or alter the designations, preferences, rights and any qualifications, limitations or restrictions of the shares of each of these series, including the dividend rights, dividend rates, conversion rights, voting rights, term of redemption, including sinking fund provisions, redemption price or prices, liquidation preferences and the number of shares constituting any series or designations of a series without further vote or action by the stockholders.

The particular terms of any series of preferred stock that we offer under this prospectus will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to that series of preferred stock. Those terms may include:

- the title and liquidation preference per share of the preferred stock and the number of shares offered;
- the purchase price of the preferred stock;
- the dividend rate (or method of calculation), the dates on which dividends will be payable, whether dividends shall be cumulative and, if so, the date from which dividends will begin to accumulate;
- any redemption or sinking fund provisions of the preferred stock;
- any conversion, redemption or exchange provisions of the preferred stock;
- the voting rights, if any, of the preferred stock; and
- any additional dividend, liquidation, redemption, sinking fund and other rights, preferences, privileges, limitations and restrictions of the preferred stock.

If the terms of any series of preferred stock being offered differ from the terms set forth in this prospectus, those terms will also be disclosed in the applicable prospectus supplement relating to that series of preferred stock. The summary in this prospectus is not complete. You should refer to the certificate of designations establishing a particular series of preferred stock which will be filed with the Secretary of State of the State of Delaware and the SEC in connection with the offering of the preferred stock.

Each prospectus supplement may describe certain U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the purchase, holding and disposition of the preferred stock that prospectus supplement covers.

Dividend Rights. The preferred stock will be preferred, to the extent of the preference to which such preferred stock is entitled, over the common stock as to payment of dividends. Before any dividends or distributions (other than dividends or distributions payable in common stock or other stock ranking junior to that series of preferred stock as to dividends and upon liquidation) on the common stock or other stock ranking junior to that series of preferred stock as to dividends and upon liquidation shall be declared and set apart for payment or paid, the holders of shares of each series of preferred stock, to the extent of the preference to which such preferred stock is entitled, will be entitled to receive dividends when, as and if declared by our board of directors or, if dividends are cumulative, full cumulative dividends for the current and all prior dividend periods (unless otherwise set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement). We will pay those dividends either in cash, shares of preferred stock, or otherwise, at the rate and on the date or dates set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. With respect to each series of preferred stock that has cumulative dividends, the dividends on each share of the series will be cumulative from the date of issue of the share unless some other date is set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the series. Accruals of dividends will not bear interest. The applicable prospectus supplement will indicate the relative ranking of the particular series of the preferred stock as to the payment of dividends, as compared with then-existing and future series of preferred stock.

Rights upon Liquidation. The preferred stock of each series will be preferred over the common stock and other stock ranking junior to that series of preferred stock as to assets, so that the holders of that series of preferred stock (unless otherwise set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement) will be entitled to be paid, upon our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, and before any distribution is made to the holders of common stock and other stock ranking junior to that series of preferred stock, the amount set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. However, in this case the holders of preferred stock of that series will not be entitled to any other or

further payment. If upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up, our net assets are insufficient to permit the payment in full of the respective amounts to which the holders of all outstanding preferred stock are entitled, our entire remaining net assets will be distributed among the holders of each series of preferred stock in amounts proportional to the full amounts to which the holders of each series are entitled, subject to any provisions of any series of preferred stock that rank it junior or senior to other series of preferred stock upon liquidation. The applicable prospectus supplement will indicate the relative ranking of the particular series of the preferred stock upon liquidation, as compared with then-existing and future series of preferred stock.

Conversion, Redemption or Exchange Rights. Except as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, the shares of a series of preferred stock will not be convertible at the option of the holder of the preferred stock, redeemable at our option or the option of the holder, as applicable, or exchangeable at our option, into another security.

Voting Rights. Except as indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement or as otherwise from time to time required by law, the holders of preferred stock will have no voting rights.

Anti-takeover Effects of Delaware Law and our Certificate of Incorporation and By-laws

Our certificate of incorporation and by-laws and Delaware law contain provisions that could have the effect of delaying, deferring or discouraging another party from acquiring control of us. These provisions, which are summarized below, are expected to discourage coercive takeover practices and inadequate takeover bids. These provisions are also designed to encourage persons seeking to acquire control of us to first negotiate with our board of directors.

Classified Board of Directors; Removal and Filling Vacancies. Our certificate of incorporation divides our board of directors into three classes of directors serving staggered, three-year terms. The classification of our board of directors has the effect of requiring at least two annual stockholder meetings, instead of one, to replace a majority of members of the board. Subject to the rights of the holders of any outstanding series of preferred stock, our certificate of incorporation and bylaws authorize only the board of directors to fill vacancies, including newly created directorships. Accordingly, this provision could prevent a stockholder from obtaining majority representation on our board of directors by enlarging the board of directors and filling the new directorships with its own nominees. The certificate of incorporation and the bylaws also provide that directors may be removed by stockholders only for cause and only by the affirmative vote of holders of a majority of the outstanding shares of voting stock.

Special Stockholder Meetings. Our certificate of incorporation and our bylaws provide that special meetings of the stockholders for any purpose or purposes, unless required by law, shall be called by the chairman of the board of directors, the chief executive officer or a majority of the board of directors. This limitation on the right of stockholders to call a special meeting could make it more difficult for stockholders to initiate actions that are opposed by the board of directors. These actions could include the removal of an incumbent director or the election of a stockholder nominee as a director. They could also include the implementation of a rule requiring stockholder ratification of specific defensive strategies that have been adopted by the board of directors with respect to unsolicited takeover bids. In addition, the limited ability of the stockholders to call a special meeting of stockholders may make it more difficult to change the existing board and management.

Amendment of Provisions in the Certificate of Incorporation. Our certificate of incorporation generally requires the affirmative vote of the holders of at least a majority of the outstanding voting stock in order to amend any provisions of the certificate of incorporation concerning:

- the removal or appointment of directors;
- the authority of stockholders to act by written consent;
- the required vote to amend the certificate of incorporation;
- calling a special meeting of stockholders;
- procedure and content of stockholder proposals concerning business to be conducted at a meeting of stockholders;
- director nominations by stockholders; and
- the issuance of preferred stock without shareholder approval.

These voting requirements make it more difficult for minority stockholders to make changes in the certificate of incorporation that could be designed to facilitate the exercise of control over us.

Certain Effects of Authorized But Unissued Stock. Our authorized but unissued shares of common stock and preferred stock may be issued without additional stockholder approval and may be utilized for a variety of corporate purposes, including future offerings to raise additional capital or to facilitate corporate acquisitions. The issuance of preferred stock could have the effect of delaying or preventing a change in control of us. The issuance of preferred stock could decrease the amount available for distribution to holders of our common stock or could adversely affect the rights and powers, including voting rights, of such holders. In certain circumstances, such issuance could have the effect of decreasing the market price of our common stock. One of the effects of the existence of unissued and unreserved

common stock or preferred stock may be to enable our board of directors to issue shares to persons friendly to current management, which could render more difficult or discourage an attempt to obtain control of us by means of a merger, tender offer, proxy contest or otherwise, and thereby protect the continuity of management. Such additional shares also could be used to dilute the stock ownership of persons seeking to obtain control of us.

Delaware law. We are a Delaware corporation and consequently are also subject to certain anti-takeover provisions of the Delaware General Corporation Law. Subject to certain exceptions, Section 203 of the General Corporation Law prevents a publicly held Delaware corporation from engaging in a “business combination” with any “interested stockholder” for three years following the date that the person became an interested stockholder, unless the interested stockholder attained such status with the approval of our board of directors or unless the business combination is approved in a prescribed manner. A “business combination” includes, among other things, a merger or consolidation involving us and the “interested stockholder” and the sale of more than 10% of our assets. In general, an “interested stockholder” is any entity or person beneficially owning 15% or more of our outstanding voting stock and any entity or person affiliated with or controlling or controlled by such entity or person. Section 203 makes it more difficult for an interested stockholder to effect various business combinations with a corporation for a three-year period. This statute could prohibit or delay mergers or other takeover or change in control attempts not approved in advance by our board of directors, and as a result could discourage attempts to acquire us, which could depress the market price of our common stock.

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants for the purchase of common stock, preferred stock or other securities. We may issue warrants independently or together with any offered securities. The warrants may be attached to or separate from those offered securities. We will issue the warrants under one or more warrant agreements to be entered into between us and a warrant agent to be named in the applicable prospectus supplement. The warrant agent will act solely as our agent in connection with the warrants and will not assume any obligation or relationship of agency or trust for or with any holders or beneficial owners of warrants.

The prospectus supplement relating to any warrants that we may offer will contain the specific terms of the warrants. These terms may include the following:

- the title of the warrants;
- the price or prices at which the warrants will be issued;
- the designation, amount and terms of the securities for which the warrants are exercisable;
- the designation and terms of the other securities, if any, with which the warrants are to be issued and the number of warrants issued with each other security;
- the aggregate number of warrants;
- any provisions for adjustment of the number or amount of securities receivable upon exercise of the warrants or the exercise price of the warrants;
- the price or prices at which the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants may be purchased;
- if applicable, the date on and after which the warrants and the securities purchasable upon exercise of the warrants will be separately transferable;
- a discussion of any material U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to the exercise of the warrants;
- the date on which the right to exercise the warrants will commence, and the date on which the right will expire;
- the maximum or minimum number of warrants that may be exercised at any time;
- information with respect to book-entry procedures, if any; and
- any other terms of the warrants, including terms, procedures and limitations relating to the exchange and exercise of the warrants.

Exercise of Warrants

Each warrant will entitle the holder of the warrant to purchase for cash the amount of common stock, preferred stock or other securities at the exercise price stated or determinable in the applicable prospectus supplement for the warrants. Warrants may be exercised at any time up to the close of business on the expiration date shown in the applicable prospectus supplement, unless otherwise specified in such prospectus supplement. After the close of business on the expiration date, unexercised warrants will become void. Warrants may be exercised as described in the applicable prospectus supplement. When the warrant holder makes the payment and properly completes and signs the warrant certificate at the corporate trust office of the warrant agent or any other office indicated in the prospectus supplement, we will, as soon as possible, forward the common stock, preferred stock or other securities that the

warrant holder has purchased. If the warrant holder exercises the warrant for less than all of the warrants represented by the warrant certificate, we will issue a new warrant certificate for the remaining warrants.

The description in the applicable prospectus supplement of any warrants we offer will not necessarily be complete and will be qualified in its entirety by reference to the applicable warrant agreement and warrant certificate, which will be filed with the SEC if we offer warrants. For more information on how you can obtain copies of any warrant certificate or warrant

agreement if we offer warrants, see “Where You Can Find More Information.” We urge you to read the applicable warrant certificate, the applicable warrant agreement and any applicable prospectus supplement in their entirety.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities being offered hereby in one or more of the following ways from time to time:

- directly to one or more purchasers;
- to or through underwriters;
- through agents or dealers; or
- through a combination of any of these methods.

The specific plan of distribution, including any underwriters, dealers, agents or direct purchasers and their compensation, for any securities offered hereunder will be identified in a prospectus supplement.

In compliance with the guidelines of the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority, Inc. (“FINRA”), the maximum discount or commission to be received by any FINRA member or independent broker-dealer may not exceed 8% of the aggregate offering price of the securities offered hereunder.

LEGAL MATTERS

Unless otherwise specified in a prospectus supplement accompanying this prospectus, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP, Los Angeles, California, will provide opinions regarding the authorization and validity of the securities. Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP may also provide opinions regarding certain other matters. Any underwriters will also be advised about legal matters by their own counsel, which will be named in the prospectus supplement.

EXPERTS

The financial statements, and the related financial statement schedule, incorporated in this Prospectus by reference from the Company’s Annual Report on Form 10-K, and the effectiveness of the Company’s internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports, which are incorporated herein by reference. Such financial statements and financial statement schedule have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This prospectus and the documents incorporated by reference herein may include forward-looking statements made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995. Such forward-looking statements may include, without limitation, statements about our market opportunities, strategies, competition, and expected activities and expenditures and at times may be identified by the use of words such as “may,” “could,” “should,” “would,” “project,” “believe,” “anticipate,” “expect,” “plan,” “estimate,” “forecast,” “potential,” “intend,” “continue” and various other words or comparable words. Forward-looking statements inherently involve risks and uncertainties. Accordingly, actual results may differ materially from those expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. Factors that could cause or contribute to such differences include, but are not limited to, the risks described under “Risk Factors” in Item 1A of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013 and our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended March 31, 2014. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date on which they are made. We expressly disclaim any obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC under the Exchange Act. You may inspect without charge any documents filed by us at the SEC’s Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, N.E., Room 1580, Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. The SEC also maintains an Internet site, www.sec.gov, that contains reports, proxy and information statements, and other information regarding issuers that file electronically

with the SEC, including The Ensign Group, Inc.

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This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we have filed with the SEC. The full registration statement can be obtained from the SEC as indicated above, or from us. The SEC allows us to “incorporate by reference” into this prospectus information filed with the SEC. This means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to information and documents filed with the SEC. Any information that we refer to in this manner is considered part of this prospectus. Any information that we file with the SEC after the date of this prospectus will automatically update and supersede the corresponding information contained in this prospectus. We specifically are incorporating by reference the following documents (other than, in each case, documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules):

• Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013;

• Portions of the Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A filed on April 16, 2014 that are incorporated by reference into Part III of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2013;

• Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarterly period ended March 31, 2014;

• Current Reports on Form 8-K dated February 13, 2014 (filed February 18, 2014), February 13, 2014 (filed February 19, 2014), February 27, 2014 (filed March 5, 2014), May 12, 2014 (filed May 13, 2014), May 13, 2014 (filed May 13, 2014), May 16, 2014 (filed May 16, 2014), May 23, 2014 (filed May 30, 2014), May 30, 2014 (filed June 5, 2014), and May 29, 2014 (filed June 5, 2014);

• The description of our common stock set forth in our registration statement on Form 8-A filed on October 19, 2007 and any amendment or report filed for the purpose of updating such description; and

All documents filed by us pursuant to Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act after the date of this prospectus and before the termination of the offering, excluding documents or portions thereof that are furnished and not filed with the SEC.

You may request a free copy of any of the documents referred to above (other than exhibits unless such exhibits are specifically incorporated by reference in such documents) by writing or calling us at: Investor Relations, The Ensign Group, Inc., 27101 Puerta Real, Suite 450, Mission Viejo, California 92691, (949) 487-9500.

PART II

INFORMATION NOT REQUIRED IN PROSPECTUS

Item 14. Other Expenses of Issuance and Distribution.

The following table sets forth estimated expenses, other than underwriting discounts and commissions, payable by us in connection with the sale of the securities being registered hereby:

	Amount to be paid*
SEC registration fee	\$*
Accounting fees and expenses	**
Legal fees and expenses	**
Printing expenses	**
Transfer agent fees and expenses	**
Stock exchange listing fees	**
Rating agency fees	**
Miscellaneous expenses	**
Total	\$**

Deferred pursuant to Rule 456(b) of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the "Securities Act"), and calculated in *connection with an offering of securities under this registration statement pursuant to Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act.

These fees cannot be estimated at this time, as they are calculated based on the securities offered and the number of **issuances. An estimate of the aggregate expenses in connection with the sale and distribution of the securities being offered will be included in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Item 15. Indemnification of Directors and Officers.

Under Section 145 of the Delaware General Corporation Law, we can indemnify our directors and officers against liabilities they may incur in such capacities, including liabilities under the Securities Act. Our bylaws provide that we will indemnify our directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by law and require us to advance litigation expenses upon our receipt of an undertaking by the director or officer to repay such advances if it is ultimately determined that the director or officer is not entitled to indemnification. Our bylaws further provide that rights conferred under such bylaws do not exclude any other right such persons may have or acquire under any bylaw, agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors, insurance policy or otherwise.

Our certificate of incorporation provides that we shall indemnify our directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by law. Our certificate of incorporation also provides that, pursuant to Delaware law, our directors shall not be liable for monetary damages for breach of the directors' fiduciary duty of care to us and our stockholders. This provision in our certificate of incorporation does not eliminate the duty of care, and in appropriate circumstances equitable remedies such as injunctive or other forms of non-monetary relief will remain available under Delaware law. In addition, each director is subject to liability for breach of the director's duty of loyalty to us for acts or omissions not in good faith or involving intentional misconduct, for knowing violations of law, for actions leading to improper personal benefit to the director, and for payment of dividends or approval of stock repurchases or redemptions that are unlawful under Delaware law. The provision also does not affect a director's responsibilities under any other law, such as the federal securities laws or state or federal environmental laws. Our certificate of incorporation further provides that we are authorized to indemnify our directors and officers to the fullest extent permitted by law through the bylaws, agreement, vote of stockholders or disinterested directors, or otherwise.

We have entered into agreements to indemnify our directors, officers and other key employees in addition to the indemnification provided for in our certificate of incorporation and bylaws. These agreements, among other things, indemnify these persons for certain expenses (including attorneys fees), judgments, fines and settlement amounts incurred by such person in any action or proceeding, including any action by or in our right, on account of services by that person as a director or officer or as a director or officer of any of our subsidiaries, or as a director or officer of any

other company or enterprise that the person provides services to at our request.
We maintain directors' and officers' liability insurance for our officers and directors.

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Item 16. Exhibits.

A list of exhibits filed herewith is contained in the exhibit index that immediately precedes such exhibits and is incorporated herein by reference.

Item 17. Undertakings.

The undersigned registrant hereby undertakes:

(A)(1) To file, during any period in which offers or sales are being made, a post-effective amendment to this registration statement:

(i) To include any prospectus required by section 10(a)(3) of the Securities Act;

(ii) To reflect in the prospectus any facts or events arising after the effective date of this registration statement (or the most recent post-effective amendment thereof) which, individually or in the aggregate, represent a fundamental change in the information set forth in this registration statement. Notwithstanding the foregoing, any increase or decrease in volume of securities offered (if the total dollar value of securities offered would not exceed that which was registered) and any deviation from the low or high end of the estimated maximum offering range may be reflected in the form of prospectus filed with the Commission pursuant to Rule 424(b) if, in the aggregate, the changes in volume and price represent no more than 20 percent change in the maximum aggregate offering price set forth in the "Calculation of Registration Fee" table in the effective registration statement; and

(iii) To include any material information with respect to the plan of distribution not previously disclosed in this registration statement or any material change to such information in this registration statement;

Provided, however, that paragraphs (A)(1)(i), (A)(1)(ii) and (A)(1)(iii) above do not apply if the information required to be included in a post-effective amendment by those paragraphs is contained in reports filed with or furnished to the Commission by the registrant pursuant to section 13 or section 15(d) of the Exchange Act that are incorporated by reference in this registration statement, or is contained in a form of prospectus filed pursuant to Rule 424(b) that is part of this registration statement.

(2) That, for the purpose of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each such post-effective amendment shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(3) To remove from registration by means of a post-effective amendment any of the securities being registered which remain unsold at the termination of the offering.

(4) That, for the purpose of determining liability under the Securities Act to any purchaser:

(i) Each prospectus filed by the registrant pursuant to Rule 424(b)(3) shall be deemed to be part of this registration statement as of the date the filed prospectus was deemed part of and included in this registration statement; and

(ii) Each prospectus required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424(b)(2), (b)(5), or (b)(7) as part of a registration statement in reliance on Rule 430B relating to an offering made pursuant to Rule 415(a)(1)(i), (vii), or (x) for the purpose of providing the information required by section 10(a) of the Securities Act of 1933 shall be deemed to be part of and included in this registration statement as of the earlier of the date such form of prospectus is first used after effectiveness or the date of the first contract of sale of securities in the offering described in the prospectus. As provided in Rule 430B, for liability purposes of the issuer and any person that is at that date an underwriter, such date shall be deemed to be a new effective date of this registration statement relating to the securities in this registration statement to which that prospectus relates, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof. Provided, however, that no statement made in a registration statement or prospectus that is part of this registration statement or made in a document incorporated or deemed incorporated by reference into this registration statement or prospectus that is part of this registration statement will, as to a purchaser with a time of contract of sale prior to such effective date, supersede or modify any statement that was made in this registration statement or prospectus that was part of this registration statement or made in any such document immediately prior to such effective date.

(5) That, for the purpose of determining liability of the registrant under the Securities Act to any purchaser in the initial distribution of the securities, the undersigned registrant undertakes that in a primary offering of securities of the undersigned registrant pursuant to this registration statement, regardless of the underwriting method used to sell the securities to the purchaser, if the securities are offered or sold to such purchaser by means of any of the following communications, the undersigned registrant will be a seller to the purchaser and will be considered to offer or sell such securities to such purchaser:

(i) Any preliminary prospectus or prospectus of the undersigned registrant relating to the offering required to be filed pursuant to Rule 424;

(ii) Any free writing prospectus relating to the offering prepared by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant or used or referred to by the undersigned registrant;

(iii) The portion of any other free writing prospectus relating to the offering containing material information about the undersigned registrant or its securities provided by or on behalf of the undersigned registrant; and

(iv) Any other communication that is an offer in the offering made by the undersigned registrant to the purchaser.

(B) That, for purposes of determining any liability under the Securities Act, each filing of the registrant's annual report pursuant to section 13(a) or section 15(d) of the Exchange Act (and, where applicable, each filing of an employee benefit plan's annual report pursuant to Section 15(d) of the Exchange Act) that is incorporated by reference in this registration statement shall be deemed to be a new registration statement relating to the securities offered therein, and the offering of such securities at that time shall be deemed to be the initial bona fide offering thereof.

(C) Insofar as indemnification for liabilities arising under the Securities Act may be permitted to directors, officers and controlling persons of the registrant pursuant to the foregoing provisions, or otherwise, the registrant has been advised that in the opinion of the SEC such indemnification is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and is, therefore, unenforceable. In the event that a claim for indemnification against such liabilities (other than the payment by the registrant of expenses incurred or paid by a director, officer or controlling person of the registrant in the successful defense of any action, suit or proceeding) is asserted by such director, officer or controlling person in connection with the securities being registered, the registrant will, unless in the opinion of its counsel the matter has been settled by controlling precedent, submit to a court of appropriate jurisdiction the question whether such indemnification by it is against public policy as expressed in the Securities Act and will be governed by the final adjudication of such issue.

SIGNATURES

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, the registrant certifies that it has reasonable grounds to believe that it meets all the requirements for filing on Form S-3 and has duly caused this registration statement to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned, thereunto duly authorized, in the City of Mission Viejo, State of California, on the 15th day of July, 2014.

THE ENSIGN GROUP, INC.

By: /s/ Christopher R. Christensen
 Name: Christopher R. Christensen
 Title: Chief Executive Officer and President

SIGNATURES AND POWER OF ATTORNEY

Each person whose signature appears below hereby constitutes and appoints each of Suzanne D. Snapper and Chad A. Keetch as such person's true and lawful attorney-in-fact and agent, with full power of substitution and resubstitution, for such person and in such person's name, place and stead, in any and all capacities, to sign any and all amendments to the registration statement, including post-effective amendments, and registration statements filed pursuant to Rule 462 under the Securities Act of 1933, and to file the same, with all exhibits thereto, and other documents in connection therewith, with the Securities and Exchange Commission, and does hereby grant unto each said attorney-in-fact and agent full power and authority to do and perform each and every act and thing requisite and necessary to be done in and about the premises, as fully to all intents and purposes as such person might or could do in person, hereby ratifying and confirming all that each said attorney-in-fact and agents or any of them, or their substitutes, may lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue hereof.

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Act of 1933, this registration statement has been signed by the following persons in the capacities and on the dates indicated.

Signatures	Title	Date
/s/ Christopher R. Christensen Christopher R. Christensen	Chief Executive Officer, President and Director (principal executive officer)	July 15, 2014
/s/ Suzanne D. Snapper Suzanne D. Snapper	Chief Financial Officer (principal financial and accounting officer)	July 15, 2014
/s/ Roy E. Christensen Roy E. Christensen	Chairman of the Board	July 15, 2014
/s/ Daren J. Shaw Daren J. Shaw	Director	July 15, 2014
/s/ Lee A. Daniels Lee A. Daniels	Director	July 15, 2014

EXHIBIT INDEX

Exhibit
Number

1.1*	Form of Underwriting Agreement.
3.1	Fifth Amended and Restated Certificate of Incorporation of The Ensign Group, Inc., filed with the Delaware Secretary of State on November 15, 2007 (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.1 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed on December 21, 2007).
3.2	Amended and Restated Bylaws of The Ensign Group, Inc. (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 3.2 to the Company's Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q filed on December 21, 2007).
4.1	Specimen common stock certificate (incorporated by reference to Exhibit 4.1 to the Company's Registration Statement on Form S-1 (Amendment No. 3) (No. 333-142897) filed on October 5, 2007).
4.4*	Specimen Preferred Stock Certificate and Form of Certificate of Designation, Preferences and Rights with respect to any series of Preferred Stock issued hereunder.
4.5*	Form of Warrant Agreement.
4.6*	Form of Warrant Certificate (included in Exhibit 4.5).
5.1	Opinion of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP.
12.1	Computation of Ratio of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends.
23.1	Consent of Deloitte & Touche LLP.
23.2	Consent of Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP (included in Exhibit 5.1).
24.1	Power of Attorney (included on signature page hereto).

* To be filed by amendment to the Registration Statement or incorporated by reference from documents filed or to be filed with the SEC under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended.