



Making Social Care  
Better for People

Inspecting for better lives

# Key inspection report

## Domiciliary care agencies

<b>Name:</b>	Guardian Homecare (West Berkshire) Ltd
<b>Address:</b>	Suite 12, Thatcham House Turners Drive Thatcham Berkshire RG19 4QD

The quality rating for this domiciliary care agency is: three star excellent service

A quality rating is our assessment of how well a care home, agency or scheme is meeting the needs of the people who use it. We give a quality rating following a full assessment of the service. We call this a 'key' inspection.

<b>Lead inspector:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Kerry Kingston	1   7   0   2   2   0   0   9

This is a report of an inspection where we looked at how well this agency is meeting the needs of people who use it. There is a summary of what we think this service does well, what they have improved on and, where it applies, what they need to do better. We use the national minimum standards to describe the outcomes that people should experience. National minimum standards are written by the Department of Health for each type of care service.

After the summary there is more detail about our findings. The following table explains what you will see under each outcome area.

**Outcome area (for example User focussed services)**

**These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:**

This box tells you the outcomes that we will always inspect against when we do a key inspection.

This box tells you any additional outcomes that we may inspect against when we do a key inspection.

**This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:**

Judgement:

This box tells you our opinion of what we have looked at in this outcome area. We will say whether it is excellent, good, adequate or poor.

Evidence:

This box describes the information we used to come to our judgement.

Copies of the National Minimum Standards – Domiciliary Care Agencies can be found at [www.dh.gov.uk](http://www.dh.gov.uk) or bought from The Stationery Office (TSO) PO Box 29, St Crispins, Duke Street, Norwich, NR3 1GN. Tel: 0870 600 5522. Online ordering from the Stationery Office is also available: [www.tso.co.uk/bookshop](http://www.tso.co.uk/bookshop)

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- Put the people who use social care first
- Improve services and stamp out bad practice
- Be an expert voice on social care
- Practise what we preach in our own organisation

Our duty to regulate social care services is set out in the Care Standards Act 2000.

## Reader Information

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## Information about the agency

Name of agency:	Guardian Homecare (West Berkshire) Ltd
Address:	Turners Drive Suite 12, Thatcham House Thatcham Berkshire RG19 4QD
Telephone number:	08458382407
Fax number:	08458382408
Email address:	sales@guardianwb.co.uk
Provider web address:	

Name of registered provider(s):	Guardian Homecare (West Berkshire) Ltd
Conditions of registration:	
Date of last inspection	<input type="text"/>
Brief description of the agency	
Brief Description of the Service:	<p>Guardian Homecare Services is a Domiciliary care agency that provies a service to approximately thirty people with very diverse needs in the local community.</p> <p>Guardian Homecare (West Berkshire) Ltd is an independent franchised branch office owned by Cliff and Glen Iredale.</p> <p>Guardian Homecare (West Berkshire) Ltds prime objective is to provide a service, which recognises the intrinsic value of people, regardless of circumstances, by respecting their uniqueness and their personal needs and treating them with respect. (Extract from the Statement of Purpose)</p>

## Summary

This is an overview of what we found during the inspection.

The quality rating for this agency is:

three star excellent service

### Our judgement for each outcome:



### How we did our inspection:

The last inspection of this service was completed on the the 22nd September 2006. This is a report for the Key Inspection, which included a routine site visit to the service. This took place between 10.00 am and and 5.00 pm on the 17th February 2009.

The information was collected from an Annual Quality Assurance Assessment, a document sent to the service from the Commission for Social Care Inspection and completed by the Registered manager. Surveys were sent to the people who are supported by the service and to staff, of the service.

There were discussions with the registered manager and two staff members. Reviewing records of the people who use the service and other records and procedures was also

used to collect information on the day of the visit.

All information received by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, since the last inspection, about this service was also taken into account when producing this report. The fees are from 17.58 pounds to 22.00 pounds per hour

### **What the agency does well:**

The agency properly assess prospective clients and their carers, if necessary, so that they can be sure that they can offer a service that people want and need.

The service makes sure that people are treated well, by making sure that privacy and respect are included in individual care plans. They check that staff understand what is meant by respect and make sure that they reflect this whilst they are doing their day to day tasks.

The agency make sure that they help people to take their medication, if necessary. Their flexible but safe approach, ensures that people are able to retain as much control as possible over their medication administration. The manager is very clear about when he should seek help and advice from other professionals to ensure their administration systems are safe, for all concerned.

The agency has a very good knowledge of Health and Safety issues and is very careful to make sure that staff and the people who use the service are kept as safe as possible. They respond quickly to any Health issues that are causing concern, such as the servicing of peoples' stair lifts.

Staff are well supervised and observed doing their jobs, on a regular basis, to ensure that they are performing to the standards expected by the agency and are offering the best care to their clients.

### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The agency make sure that applicants complete application forms which include a full employment history, so that they can see all the work they have done in the past. The agency adhere to the Criminal Records Bureau checks guidelines to make sure that staff are safe to work with people, before they are allowed to do so.

The agency have full training records so that they can see what training people have done, including during their first few weeks of work, and what they need to do to ensure they are properly skilled to complete the work they are asked to do.

Staff are regularly supervised, 'on the job' by senior staff members so that they can assure themselves people who use the service are receiving the best possible care and can identify any areas of support that staff may need.

### **What they could do better:**

The service has no requirements or recommendations from this inspection, it recognises improvements it can make and ensures they are included on the development plan.

If you want to know what action the person responsible for this agency is taking following this report, you can contact them using the details set out on page 4.

The report of this inspection is available from our website [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk). You can get printed copies from [enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@csci.gsi.gov.uk) or by telephoning our order line –0870 240 7535.

## Details of our findings

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## User focussed services

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People are confident that the agency can support them. This is because there is an accurate needs assessment, which they, or someone close to them, have been involved in. This tells the agency all about them and the support they need and is carried out before they are offered a personal domiciliary care service.

People and their relatives can decide whether the agency can meet their support needs. This is because they, or someone close to them, have got full, clear, accurate and up to date information about the agency. People know that the agency can meet their needs because staff have the skills and experience to give them the care they need. If they decide to use the agency they know about their rights and responsibilities because there is an easy to understand contract or statement of terms and conditions between them and the agency that includes how much they will pay and what the agency provides for their money. People are confident that the agency handles information about them appropriately. This is because the agency follows their policies and procedures. They get a consistent, and flexible care service from reliable and dependable staff members.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

The agency properly assess clients and ensures it can meet their needs before offering them a service.

Evidence:

The assessments for the three newest clients were seen. All had been supplied with a Statement of Purpose and a Service User Guide and provided with contracts by the Local Authority or a statement of terms and conditions by the service. The manager explained that the service work closely with another local authority who are able to translate documents into any language, including Braille or other communication systems, as necessary, to ensure that all their prospective and current clients have access to the important information. The documents are also available on tape, if that

## Evidence:

is the most useful format. The manager described how they are trying to assist someone to use a symbol communication system to increase their ability to communicate with those around them to enhance their lifestyle.

Individuals had full assessments completed by care managers working for the Local Authority (West Berkshire), which the care manager develops into an overall care plan, specifically stating services to be provided such as rehabilitation. It described the programme, how long it was to continue for, what was expected from other professionals and when it was to begin and who was to provide it. People who use the service are included in the assessment and care planning by care managers and agree to the care plan.

The agency complete a detailed assessment of individuals which is carried out by the registered manager or the assistant manager of the service. The services' needs assessment includes a service user profile, personal network, existing supports, medical including all conditions medication and allergies, breathing, nutrition, mobility, behaviour, practical task ability and religious/ social/ cultural needs. These headings are completed as is appropriate for the complexity of the care package and how much care is being provided.

## Personal care

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

Each person is treated as an individual and the agency is responsive to his or her race, culture, religion, age, disability, gender and sexual orientation. Their right to privacy is respected and the support they get from workers is given in a way that maintains their dignity. If people take medicine, they manage it themselves if they can. If people cannot manage their medicine, the agency supports them with it in a safe way.

People's needs and goals are met. The agency has a plan of care that the person, or someone close to them, has been involved in making. They are able to make decisions about their life, with support if they need it, as the staff promote their rights, choices and independence.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **excellent** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

The agency ensure that they involve people in panning their care and treat the people who use the service with respect and dignity.

The agency assist people to maintain and develop their independence, as is appropriate.

Robust procedures are in place and staff adhere to them, to ensure that medication is administered safely to those who need assistance.

Evidence:

Care plans for four people with different needs were seen. All care plans are very comprehensive and included detailed assessments. Risk assessments are developed by the manager or assistant manager are depending on the needs of the individual in relation to their care package. The agency note peoples' preferences, wishes and choices and include how to work with families, whether the client lives in the family home or not. A Mental health needs section of the overall assessment, notes if people are able to make their own decisions and if not who should be consulted. The personal care support plan includes a very detailed routine of the entire time that the staff member spends with the person who uses the service, whatever the duration. It also

## Evidence:

includes a section that describes the expected outcome from the tasks completed. If appropriate, people have goal plans included in care plans, particularly if support is being offered short term for rehabilitation programmes, such as someone being helped to practise to dress and complete personal care tasks after a lengthy stay in hospital.

The Agencies' carers call in to the office, either by telephone or by person to report any areas of concern they may have with regard to peoples' behaviour changes they have noticed, such as personal hygiene deteriorating or someone sleeping more than usual. These notifications may result in a review of the care plan and a referral to the care manager for more time or whatever is felt is needed to meet the persons needs. Care plans include details of peoples' sensitivities, overall well being, choices, preferences and how to maintain independence. The plans and daily records note moods and attitudes staff must display to ensure peoples' positive feelings. Personal care routines note how staff must ensure peoples' privacy and dignity such as how and when to use a modesty towel. How to respect others who live in the home is also noted on the daily routines, such as 'always make sure you greet her husband and tell them what you are doing', 'you must ensure people know what you are doing for them and talk to them whilst giving care' and listen to what people are saying. Staffs' attitude and promoting privacy and dignity aswell as treating people with respect form part of the checks completed when staff are being observed in the performance of their job. These checks are carried out frequently on staff members and form the major part of the supervision process. Care plans note what people like to be called and how they are to be helped with meeting any individual or diverse needs such as help with preparing food in a specific way, help to continue with important customs as safely as possible and details of how to ensure proper communication with people.

People can request that certain issues do not appear on their care plans, the agency respect these wishes and ensure there are other methods of conveying information to those who need it. Surveys received from people who use the service said that their privacy and dignity is always respected by carers. The medication assessments are very detailed and clear, they include how people medicate, how staff assist and precisely what form this assistance takes. The medication assessment is included in the overall check list type assessments which are very clear and safe enabling staff to understand exactly how people are helped and their preferences and choices, with regard to taking medication. The agency has a robust medication policy that adheres to the Local Authorities' medication policy (a condition of contracts). Staff are trained in medication administration and have very clear guidelines and instructions for the administration of medication (generic aswell as individual). The medication administration records seen were properly completed and the manager confirmed that there had been no medication administration errors in the past year. There was a discussion about how the agency could help with people with 'pain' patches, the

Evidence:

manager was advised to look on the pharmacy part of CSCI website, the manager confirmed that he would talk to pharmacy inspector.

The manager has an extensive knowledge of the people who use the service , their assessed needs and the content of their care plans.

## Protection

**These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:**

People using the agency are safeguarded. This is because the agency follows health and safety procedures, keeps records appropriately and ensures their staff follow policies and understand the importance of assessing risks. The agency safeguards people from abuse, neglect and self harm and takes action to follow up any allegations.

People are confident that their property and money will always be safe as the agency follows the right procedures. Their health and rights are safeguarded as the staff keep an accurate record in their home of all the support they give them.

**This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:**

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

Clients health and safety is taken seriously and people are supported by robust risk assessments.

People are safeguarded from abuse as staff understand how to keep people safe and follow the correct procedures to ensure their safety.

Evidence:

The agency have a comprehensive Health and Safety policy, senior staff have Health and Safety expertise and qualifications. The agency develop generic and individual risk assessments dependant on the needs of the people who use the service. When the manager or assistant manager visit the prospective client to complete the initial assessment they also complete a risk assessment, these reflect the safety needs of the individual and the staff. This includes an assessment of the users home environment to see if any additional risks are present. The agency have generic COSHH statements, which include the most widely used cleaning substances, these are included on peoples files if staff carry out any cleaning operations for them. If staff come across new or unknown substances they alert the office who are able to access Oxford University library who will find the substance and provide a COSHH sheet (free of charge). Care plans include risk assessments and daily routines note when staff must adhere to

## Evidence:

infection control guidelines for instance, when to use gloves and when to use lifting and handling techniques such as a 'slide sheet to be used for this operation'. There is also a section for noting when equipment has been serviced and the manager is aware of any emerging issues such as stair lift maintenance in peoples' homes. Staff are supplied with a range of protective equipment such as a torch, tabards, gauntlets, shoe covers, hand sanitisers and gloves. Staff are trained in Health and Safety as confirmed by staff and training records. There have been five recorded accidents throughout the year, these were appropriately dealt with and action taken to minimise the risk of recurrence, as appropriate.

The service has a robust whistle blowing policy and all staff are trained in the Protection of Vulnerable Adults (Safeguarding is part of their induction, senior staff test this knowledge to ensure staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting the people they care for).

There have been no safeguarding concerns about the service but the Agency has referred issues that effect the people who use their service to the safeguarding co-ordinator of the Local Authority to ensure peoples' safety in the community.

Staff carefully note any changes in peoples needs and phone to alert the office if peoples' well being appears to be deteriorating or compromised in any way.

The agency has a clear policy on how to deal with peoples' finances, staff generally don't deal with money but there is a detailed and clear procedure for staff to follow should it become necessary.

Two staff spoken to had a good knowledge of safeguarding issues and understood their moral and legal responsibilities, to the people in their care.

The Commission has received no information with regard to safeguarding issues about this service.

## Managers and staff

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People have confidence in the staff at the agency because checks have been done to make sure that they are fit to do the job. Their needs are met and they are supported as the staff get relevant training, support and supervision from their managers.

People have safe and appropriate support because the staff providing their care are qualified and competent. They are confident that the staff that provide their support are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

The recruitment process is robust and fully protects people who use the service from unsuitable staff.

Staff are properly supervised to ensure that they are effectively fulfilling their role and responsibilities

Evidence:

Recruitment records for three staff members were seen. The agency have new application forms which are detailed and include a full employment history, four referees are requested because of difficulties getting them returned. All necessary information was contained in the staff files. The service keep interview notes and have a 'tracking' check list to ensure that all the necessary information has been obtained. The recruitment procedures are robust and have been improved since the last inspection, over a two year period, to ensure best practise. The agency check peoples' insurance, on an annual basis, to make sure they are able to use their car for business purposes, but also have contingency insurance so that if someone's insurance is not as comprehensive as it should be the agency have the appropriate cover.

The service has a system of recording all training that staff have completed, beginning with induction. The induction system is comprehensive and structured and includes computer theory based training and 'on the job' training with the assistance of a senior

## Evidence:

or experienced staff member. The induction and probationary period is three months but it is noted in contracts that it can be extended to six, depending on the skills and experience of the individual staff member. The first two weeks of employment are training. The agency have adopted an on-line learning system that they have developed with a training provider, staff are assessed through observation against occupational standards. Staff have to complete questionnaires and do 1:1 work with supervisors to ensure they have understood the induction/training. The system is focused on competence and performance and is in line with N.V.Q. training, it will be developed to include witness testimonies from people who use the service.

Staff are supervised at least three monthly and much more frequently when they start work. Supervisions are now practically based, senior staff do observations to check on staffs progress. Notes of some of the observations included how staff had made sure people were respected and their dignity and privacy was maintained. Extensive notes are kept of these observational supervisions. Appraisals are completed three monthly/six monthly and annually thereafter. Staff spoken to confirmed that they had received their 2008 appraisals.

Two staff spoken to said that they felt supported by the management team and communication is good. There has been only one staff meeting this year but staff come into the office on a regular basis and often a group of staff get together informally, however it is planned to have more formal meetings and take notes of them. Staff are communicated with by the assistant manager via the telephone and written memorandum. They also call into the office, frequently, to leave information about people they care for as noted in peoples' files.

Currently only 4 of the 25 staff have a qualification but approximately 90% of unqualified staff are pursuing an N.Q.2 or 3 qualification. The manager confirmed that most of the staff will be qualified by September 1st 2009.

## Organisation and running of the business

These are the outcomes that people using domiciliary care agencies should experience. They reflect the things that people have said are important to them:

People get consistent and planned support from the agency because the manager runs it appropriately with an open approach that makes them feel valued and respected.

People using the agency are safeguarded because it follows financial and accounting procedures, keeps record appropriately and ensures that their staff follow policies. If people have concerns about the agency they, or people close to them, know how to complain. Their concern is looked into and action taken to put things right.

This is what people using this domiciliary care agency experience:

Judgement:

People using this service experience **good** quality outcomes in this area. We have made this judgement using a range of evidence, including a visit to this service.

The agency is very well managed, providing a consistent and well planned service to the people who use it.

People are confident that the agency listens to their concerns, complaints and comments and acts upon them.

Evidence:

The agency is situated near to the town centre and is accessible via a lift by people who use the service and their relatives. It was noted that clients do sometimes visit the office to 'see what goes on there' and to meet people who may be voices on the phone. The registered manager has completed a Registered Managers' Award and has various other qualifications to enable him to properly manage the service. The manager is also the responsible individual, who owns the agency with a partner who also works in the offices. The registered manager continues to run the service on a full time basis.

The Agency work hard to limit the number of staff providing a service to individuals, so that people have as consistent care as is possible. The people who use the service sign staff time sheets to track how long people stay at their homes and special arrangements are made if people are identified as being particularly vulnerable. For instance staff ring the office when they arrive at one persons' home so that managers

## Evidence:

know that someone has arrived on time to give a client their vital morning medication. Office staff are trained and able to provide direct care, which they do from time to time to cover any unplanned staff absences and to keep them aware of the care task. The agency won a three year contract with the Local Authority in September 2008, which means that they can look at more long term development plans for the service.

The agency send an audit survey every three months to people who use the service to check that they are satisfied with the quality of the service offered, however they are looking to change to every six or 12 months as people do not return them. They are also looking at alternative ways of collecting quality information, such as observation supervisions and clients witness statements. The agency also receive Quality Assurance information from the local Authority who conduct an independent quality check and present their findings. The Local Authorities Quality questionnaire produced very positive views of the service such as 100% of the 10 surveys returned stating that the agency listens to concerns and responds appropriately, the service has always been excellent and people are very satisfied with the service. Comments also included 'the service and carers are excellent and thoughtful' and on the whole are 'superb'.

There is a comprehensive complaints procedure. They have noted 12 complaints since September 2006, all have been dealt with appropriately and fully recorded. Seven compliments have been received which were mainly focusing on the high quality of the staff and their expertise. The Commission has received no information about complaints with regard to this service.

Are there any outstanding requirements from the last inspection?

Yes

No

## Outstanding statutory requirements

These are requirements that were set at the previous inspection, but have still not been met. They say what the registered person had to do to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
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## Requirements and recommendations from this inspection:

### Immediate requirements:

These are immediate requirements that were set on the day we visited this domiciliary care agency. The registered person had to meet these within 48 hours.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
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### Statutory requirements

These requirements set out what the registered person must do to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must do this within the timescales we have set.

No.	Standard	Regulation	Requirement	Timescale for action
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### Recommendations

These recommendations are taken from the best practice described in the National Minimum Standards and the registered person(s) should consider them as a way of improving their service.

No.	Refer to Standard	Good Practice Recommendations
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## Helpline:

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