

# Key inspection report

## Domiciliary care agencies

<b>Name:</b>	Elite Assistance Ltd
<b>Address:</b>	295 - 297 Kenilworth Road Balsall Common Solihull West Midlands CV7 7EL

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

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

<b>Lead inspector:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
Julie Preston	0 2 0 2 2 0 1 0

This is a review of quality of outcomes that people experience in this agency. We believe high quality care should

- Be safe
- Have the right outcomes, including clinical outcomes
- Be a good experience for the people that use it
- Help prevent illness, and promote healthy, independent living
- Be available to those who need it when they need it.

The first part of the review gives the overall quality rating for the agency:

- 3 stars - excellent
- 2 stars - good
- 1 star - adequate
- 0 star - poor

There is also a bar chart that gives a quick way of seeing the quality of care that the home provides under key areas that matter to people.

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.

We review the quality of the service against outcomes from the National Minimum Standards (NMS). Those standards are written by the Department of Health for each type of care service.

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)

The mission of the Care Quality Commission is to make care better for people by:

- Regulating health and adult social care services to ensure quality and safety standards, drive improvement and stamp out bad practice
- Protecting the rights of people who use services, particularly the most vulnerable and those detained under the Mental Health Act 1983
- Providing accessible, trustworthy information on the quality of care and services so people can make better decisions about their care and so that commissioners and providers of services can improve services.
- Providing independent public accountability on how commissioners and providers of services are improving the quality of care and providing value for money.

## Reader Information

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## Information about the agency

Name of agency:	Elite Assistance Ltd
Address:	295 - 297 Kenilworth Road Balsall Common Solihull West Midlands CV7 7EL
Telephone number:	01676530305
Fax number:	01676530304
Email address:	
Provider web address:	

Name of registered provider(s):	Elite Assistance Ltd
Conditions of registration:	
Date of last inspection	<input type="text"/>
Brief description of the agency	<p>Elite Assistance Ltd is a small domiciliary agency providing a service to meet the individual needs of older people and younger adults with a learning, physical disability or who are ill. Advice and support is given when requested and following a full assessment of needs. The agency currently has a contract with Solihull Primary Care Trust and the Continuing Care Team (Solihull) to provide domiciliary care to adults as well as contracts with Birmingham and Coventry City Councils. They also have individual private contracts with service users. Information about fees and charges can be obtained by contacting the agency.</p>

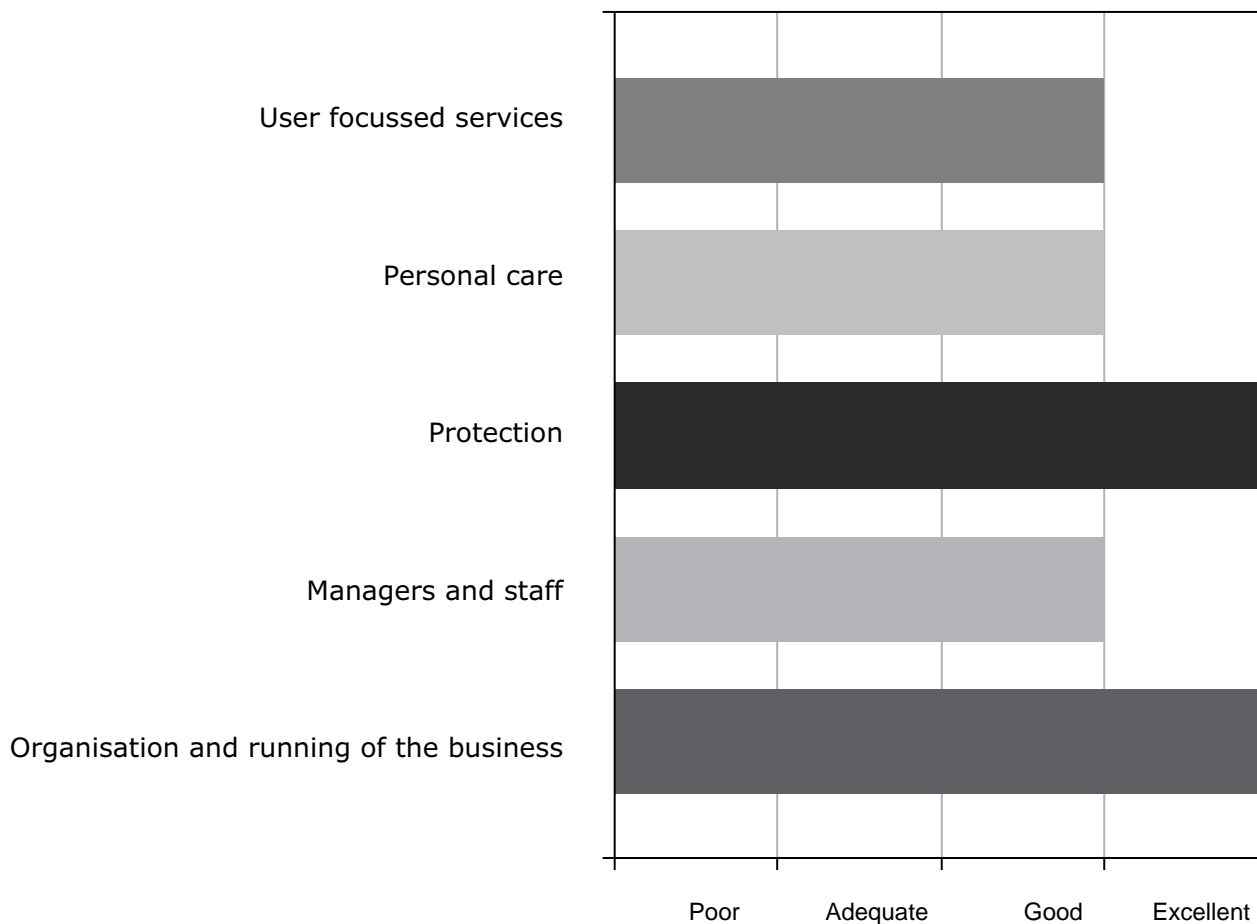
## Summary

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 focus of inspections undertaken by the Care Quality Commission is upon outcomes for people who use services and their views of the service provided. This process considers the agency's capacity to meet regulatory requirements, national minimum standards and focuses on aspects of service provision that need further development.

Before we visited the agency we looked at their Annual Quality Assurance Assessment (AQAA) which provides information about the way that the agency are meeting standards and identifies how they plan to maintain and improve outcomes for the people who use it. We also reviewed information about complaints and notifications regarding the protection of vulnerable adults.

Our visit took place over one day and was unannounced. We were able to meet managers from the agency and a number of staff who work with the people who use its services. We spoke to four people about their experience of receiving care from the

agency also.

Four people were case tracked. Case tracking involves talking to people about the care they receive, looking at their records and talking to the staff who support them. This helps us focus on outcomes for people who use the service.

We looked at staff training and supervision records, policies relating to health and safety, quality assurance, the management of individual's finances and medicines management. We interviewed four members of staff to get information about the training they receive and how they are supported to meet people's needs.

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

People have access to information about the agency so that they can make an informed choice about whether to use its services.

People's needs are assessed before a service is offered so that they can be confident that their individual needs will be met.

Care plans and risk assessments are clearly written and understood by the staff team so that consistent care is offered to people.

People are treated with respect and staff have a good understanding of promoting dignity so that people feel valued.

Positive comments received from people who use the service indicate that the staff team are friendly, respectful and understanding of people's individual needs.

Staff receive training, professional development opportunities and supervision so that they are equipped to meet the needs of people who use the service.

The agency has policies and procedures in place to listen and respond to people's concerns and complaints and to safeguard them from risk of harm.

Staff are quick to respond if a person is unwell and there are written procedures to explain how to do this.

The agency is being well managed for the benefit of the people who use it.

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

The agency continues to provide a service that is "person centred" and run in the best interests of it's service users.

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

No requirements were made as a result of our visit.

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 on page 4.

The report of this inspection is available from our website [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk). You can get printed copies from [enquiries@cqc.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@cqc.org.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.

People have access to information about the agency before a care package is offered so that they can make an informed choice about whether to use the agency's services.

There are procedures for assessing the needs of people who use the service so that they can be confident that their individual needs will be understood and met.

Evidence:

The agency has a service user guide, brochure and statement of purpose that are made available to people before a care package is offered to them. These documents provide important information about the services that are available and other details about the agency, including the procedure for raising concerns and complaints and information about fees and charges.

## Evidence:

People who use the service told us that they had received a copy of these documents, which are kept in their homes. This should ensure that individuals have accurate information about the service they are receiving.

Assessments were seen in the two people's records that we sampled, both from the funding authority and from Elite Assistance staff. Each assessment included details of the person's needs with regard to their health, personal care, mobility, medicines management and any specialist equipment used to promote independence. Risk assessments had been completed to make sure that known hazards were identified and measures put in place to protect the individual.

The records that we looked at showed that assessments had been made prior to a service being offered so that people could be confident that their individual needs could be met by the agency.

We spoke to three people who use the agency. They told us that staff had been out to visit them at home to make their assessments before a care package was offered. The people confirmed that they had a copy of their individual assessment and care plan at their home. This should contribute toward staff having sufficient information to enable them to meet people's needs.

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

People's needs are clearly recorded in a plan of care so that staff have accurate information upon which to make sure those needs are met.

Medicines are well managed so that people receive their medication as planned and according to their individual needs.

People are treated with respect and their privacy and dignity is promoted by the staff team.

Evidence:

We looked at care plans for four people who use the agency's services, three in detail and a random check of the remaining one. A care plan is a document that explains the person's needs and the support they require to ensure those needs are understood and met.

Care plans had been clearly written and reviewed on a regular basis. Each care plan described how to promote the person's dignity when receiving personal care and minimise risks to the individual's health and well being. The four members of staff that

Evidence:

we spoke to were able to give examples of how they respected the privacy and dignity of the people they care for such as using towels to cover people and closing curtains and doors during personal care tasks.

The agency has a computerised system of recording events that have an impact on the delivery of service to each person, such as care plan and risk assessment reviews, health care concerns raised by staff and the action taken in response, the outcome of quality assurance questionnaires and any issues of staff being late to visit the person. The manager and staff present during our visit commented that the system worked well and reduced the need to look through vast amounts of paperwork in order to plan and review people's care.

We spoke to three people who use Elite Assistance for their care. They told us -

"I am very satisfied with the care I receive".

"You couldn't wish for a better group of carers".

"A first rate service".

We looked at the agency's policy for managing and administering medicines which had been reviewed in 2009. Staff told us that they receive training in the safe handling of medicines and confirmed that there are quality assurance systems in place to review medicines administration.

The care plans and risk assessments that we sampled showed that people's needs with regard to their medication had been recorded. In one case a care plan stated that the individual managed their own medicines, however there were medication records in place which indicated that staff had been giving support in this area. There were several periods when staff had not signed the record to evidence that assistance had been given. We discussed this with the manager who advised that she would investigate the matter further and take action to address the outcome.

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

The agency's health and safety procedures reduce the risk of harm to people for their ongoing safety and well being.

The agency has policies, procedures and staff training which should protect people from the risk of harm and abuse.

Evidence:

The agency has a health and safety policy which had been reviewed in 2009. This clearly stated the arrangements for promoting the health and safety of the people who use the service and the staff team.

The four members of staff that we spoke to all confirmed that they had received health and safety, moving and handling, food preparation, fire safety and infection control training before starting work with people in their own homes. Certificates of the completion of this training were observed in staff training records.

There is a system for the reporting of accidents and a member of staff showed us evidence that care plans and risk assessments had been reviewed when accidents had taken place. Risk assessments were looked at in people's files which described any

## Evidence:

hazards associated in their home environments that needed to be addressed.

We saw observation records that are made of staff's practice which showed that checks had been made to make sure they were using appropriate personal protective equipment such as disposable gloves and aprons so that the risk of harm to people was reduced. Two safeguarding referrals had been made to Social Services Departments by the agency in keeping with its own procedures and those of local authority adult protection protocols. The Commission had been advised of all of these referrals and it was evident that the agency is following its procedures for reporting safeguarding issues effectively.

The agency has procedures in place with regard to the handling of people's finances. The staff we spoke to were able to describe the safeguards used for people's protection and confirmed that training is provided at induction. Financial records are subject to regular audit by a senior member of staff, of which records are kept. There have been no financial irregularities reported within the last twelve months. This indicates that the procedures for safeguarding people's finances are robust.

We spoke to four members of staff, all of whom stated that they had received training in the protection of vulnerable adults both at induction and either through National Vocational Qualification training or external training sessions. There were certificates on record in the staff members' files to support this.

The manager told us (via the agency's Annual Quality Assurance Assessment) that over 50% of the staff team had achieved National Vocational Training in care. This should contribute toward the deployment of a knowledgeable and skilled team of staff.

All of the staff that we spoke to said that senior staff were available 24 hours a day if they needed to report concerns about people's well being. This should ensure that people who use the agency's services are protected from possible harm and abuse.

One person who uses the agency's services said that she felt "as safe as houses" with the carers who supported her.

## 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.

There are robust procedures for staff recruitment and selection to ensure the ongoing protection of people who use the service.

People are cared for and supported by a well trained and supervised team of staff who understand their individual needs.

Evidence:

Three staff files were looked at to make sure that they contained documentation to evidence that they were suitable to work with people who use the agency's services. All included Criminal Records Bureau checks and Protection of Vulnerable Adults checks. References had been received, application and health declaration forms completed and staff had provided proof of their identity. The agency employs a designated officer who takes responsibility for the recruitment and selection of staff. It was evident from looking at staff records that effective procedures were in place to safeguard people using the agency's services.

Each member of staff completes training before they start work in people's homes. We looked at records of training and found that all mandatory training had been provided as well as training that is specific to the needs of individuals who use the agency such as palliative care and dementia care awareness. Records showed that refresher training is provided on a regular basis so that the staff team have opportunities to

Evidence:

update their knowledge and skills.

Staff told us that the agency offers good training opportunities. All of the staff we spoke to said they felt they had received sufficient training to meet their individual needs.

The agency has an induction procedure that includes new workers shadowing more experienced staff during their first few weeks of employment. One staff member told us that this was very useful as it permitted them to observe care practice and allowed them opportunities to ask questions if they were unsure of any elements of individual's care needs. From discussion with staff and observation of their records it was evident that they receive regular supervision and observation of their work practice. The observation records showed that senior staff make unannounced visits at varying times, to check that staff are meeting people's needs safely.

We asked three people who use the agency's services their opinions of the professionalism of the staff team. They told us,

"Their attitude is wonderful. I am more than satisfied".

"They are skilled at their jobs".

"I have no complaints. My carers do everything I need doing and they do it very well".

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

The agency is being well managed so that people receive a well planned and consistent service.

Complaints and quality assurance systems are in place so that people can be confident they will be listened to and consulted about the service they receive.

Evidence:

The agency's office base is located in the Berkswell area of Solihull close to the border with Coventry. As well as office space there is a training room that is well used by the staff team. There is secure storage for the retention of confidential documents.

The arrangements for the management of the service are clear and set out in the agency's statement of purpose. The registered manager was present during our visit and demonstrated commitment towards continuing to manage the service for the benefit of the people who use it. The agency's AQAA had been completed to a high standard and contained information about planned improvements to the service that reflected people's feedback as part of quality assurance systems in place.

Staff made positive comments about the manager and the way that the service is run. We were told that the manager was always friendly and approachable; with a professional approach and a good knowledge base.

## Evidence:

There is a written complaints procedure that is made available to people both in the service user guide and statement of purpose. All of the people that we spoke to said that they knew who to raise concerns and complaints with and were confident that the agency would listen and act upon what they said.

There are systems of quality assurance in place such as reviewing care plans and risk assessments, staff training and supervision. We saw records which showed that questionnaires are sent to people who use the service every year. We looked at the most recent ones dated January 2010. Comments included -

"Nothing is too much trouble, carers are superb". "Value for money is excellent". "You have made us very happy". "I am very satisfied at present". "Everyone who comes are polite, friendly and good at their jobs". "I would recommend them to anyone".

Some questionnaires cited examples where people were not happy with elements of the service they receive. There was written evidence to show that the manager had taken action to address individual's concerns. These comments did not make up the majority of those sampled. Of the twenty questionnaires we sampled, eighteen people rated the agency as good or excellent.

People who use the service take part in a review of their care package after one month of the service starting, then six monthly or if their individual needs change. A three month quality review also takes place to make sure that people are happy with the service they receive.

It was evident that the agency takes quality measures seriously and take action to respond to people's concerns should they have any.

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

## 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

### 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

### 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
1	10	Medication care plans should be reviewed to clearly describe how people should be supported to make sure their individual needs are met.

## Helpline:

**Telephone:** 03000 616161

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**Web:** [www.cqc.org.uk](http://www.cqc.org.uk)

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