

CIC Annual Report 2014 for Going For Independence CIC (GFI)
Company Registration No. 6729549
GFI Year ending 20 October 2014

Social Audit Report – Part 1 – Description of the company's activities

Our core business

GFI's core business is to enable individuals to be able to access independent advice and information about equipment, gadgets and home / work adaptations (including Telecare) to help them to live independently and safely with the best possible quality of life. We run a helpline and a Directory of Independent OTs and represent our stakeholders on numerous panels and groups.

The company has developed collaborations and links with a number of key national organisations that share our vision for people to be empowered to live independently with choice and control over their lives.

Political and Financial pressures

The continuous changes to welfare state provision – for both NHS services and care and support - are stimulating the development of private sector services and new technologies. Competition for funding is difficult to access for charities and small enterprises. Our charitable work continues to expand but is dependent on individual commitment.

Innovate-UK (previously the Technology Strategy Board) and the Long Term Care Revolution

Representing both GFI and the national charity COESI, the MD in partnership with Rescon Ltd. made a successful application to the TSB for funding to run a 9-month pilot project called One Precious Life (OPL), which ran from January to September 2014. The project combined technology, the provision of tailored information and advice and the principles of high achievement athlete training (making small incremental changes) to assist people with a range of long term conditions.

GFI has been able to use its considerable knowledge and experience in a meaningful way and to share techniques for managing independent living with a wide audience. With Tom Dawson of Rescon, Pam Bennett, the MD of GFI, worked on the development of training materials for life coaches, recruited and trained 4 graduates and set up an operational base in Liverpool to test the concept. Outcomes for participants were extremely good and we saw direct improvements in their health and wellbeing.

The final outcomes report and economic evaluation for the project is being prepared in October 2014. The MD will be attending the Innovate-UK launch of the next government funding wave – the National Challenge, in November 2014 and hopes to work in collaboration with others on new independent living projects.

The GFI CIC has benefited the community in the following ways:-

GFI became involved in the One Precious Life project through its link with COESI, and a donation was made to the charity in recognition of this. GFI is one of the founder members of the Centre of Excellence for Sensory Impairment (COESI – www.coesi.org) and GFI continues to work with the organisation helping to develop income generating work. In the NE of England we are developing links with local charities and continue to network in other areas of the UK.

The MD of GFI is Chair of the Board of Directors/Trustees for the Centre of Excellence for Sensory Impairment charity and the GFI Team provides free management services for the COESI website and social media, and represents the organisation at local and regional meetings, ensuring that issues of accessibility are considered at all times.

The GFI Directory is aimed at helping people to find an independent equipment assessor (both Occupational Therapists and Trusted Assessors) and related / complementary equipment services (<http://directory.goingforindependence.org>).

Our social enterprise offers free directory entries for Trusted Assessors, OTs, Independent Living Centres, Adaptation companies, Equipment services and associated businesses and our membership is growing. We are investing further in its development and promotion over the next 12 months.

Part 2 – Consultation with stakeholders

Through the wide network and developments made through participation in the One Precious Life project, GFI has researched widely to ensure our knowledge base is up to date and consulted with many more people in the community. Our stakeholders include our contacts, older and disabled people, young people and children with disabilities, families, friends and carers, Occupational Therapists and health and social care professionals. GFI services cover the whole of the UK.

During 2014 GFI has continued to work with its volunteer Advisory Group who we communicate with through online consultations and emails. We value the insights, knowledge and experience they bring for the benefit of the services we provide.

Summary

Going For Independence continues to be a successful organisation which both directly and indirectly provides services for improving the health and wellbeing of people of all ages and abilities. The organisation is flexible with the ability to continually develop in innovative ways to ensure that it provides relevant services for people, helping them to live their lives independently and with dignity.

Pam Bennett - MD Going For Independence CIC
October 2014