

CASE STUDY



Care Solutions

“We had almost come to the end of the road with Investors in People, but New Choices means it is right back at the heart of our business strategy and will remain so indefinitely.”

**Howard Elliot, Regional General Manager
Scotland**



BACKGROUND

Size:	380 employees
Sector:	Health and Social Care
Location:	Across Scotland
Status:	Began working with Investors in People in 1998, achieving first Recognition in 2000, Successful Single Framework (New Choices) Review in 2008.

THE ORGANISATION

Care Solutions provides a range of care and support services for people across Scotland who have complex needs, physical or sensory impairment, learning disability, challenging behaviour, acquired brain injury, mental health needs or a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder. With an underlying philosophy of delivering individual person-centred care and support, their staff support and empower service users to develop and acquire new skills, working towards personal goals and developing their own individual and inclusive lifestyles.

- **Provided a solid framework for management development**
- **Increased reputation and Competitiveness**
- **Supported business development across Scotland**

THE CHALLENGE

A significant issue facing Howard Elliot, Regional Manager Scotland, is that in his view employees in the sector are traditionally good carers but are not necessarily skilled at being managers and can lack the necessary business skills to manage an organisation successfully.

Care Solutions wanted to instill good management practice and ensure that employees would have the right structures and training behind them in order to support the business. Investors in People was seen as a good business model for this; giving direction for training and development and ensuring operations were aligned with good practice.

As Howard says: "The ethos of Investors in People is one that we embrace: if we are good with our staff and develop our staff, it will get through to end service users and improve their quality of life. If staff are happy in their job, positive and motivated then that will reflect in the quality of service they provide"

THE STRATEGY

Self assessment informed a staging plan; using the Investors in People framework to identify and work on any gaps.

There were elements of the framework that were less significant for the organisation, but for the 2008 assessment, Care Solutions were able to use Investors in People New Choices; a new way of working with the Investors in People framework. For the assessment, they could select areas of particular importance and relevance to their specific business needs over and above level 1, allowing them to focus development where it needed to be to suit their business objectives.

Key to working with the framework was the relationship with their Specialist who as well as performing the assessment, also worked with Howard's team in advising and supporting their Investors in People development activities, particularly during a recent period of major change and staff acquisition.

THE RESULTS

In Howard's view, Care Solutions has successfully aligned what they do with best practice. They have developed a 4 year continual professional development programme for its managers using topics drawn from the framework.

Working with Investors in People has increased their reputation for being a really good care provider and given a solid foundation for the business.

Where similar care organisations have started with good intentions but have lacked the business skills to continue operating, Care Solutions has been extremely successful and able to expand. "That's really what's happened in Scotland," says Howard, "We started with only Glasgow, but now we're able to offer services and support [to clients] across Scotland."

Care Solutions has worked with other frameworks previously, but as Howard says: "For us Investors in

People is just the one that makes sense for us."

New Choices has reinvigorated their approach to Investors in People and continuous business improvement, giving, Howard feels, direction and somewhere for them to go based on their priorities, rather than it being a "tick box" exercise. After working with the framework for ten years, New Choices has been an exciting change for Care Solutions.

"We had almost come to the end of the road with Investors in People, but New Choices means it is back right at the heart of our business strategy and will remain so indefinitely, says Howard. "Given we can focus in, there's now somewhere to go."