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In the past decade Cedar has more than doubled its customer base; providing services to over 2,100 people with disabilities in 2013/14. This level of growth is a result of Cedar's long-standing commitment to adding value for customers. Growth has not compromised quality and customers have expressed consistently high levels of satisfaction (>94%) with services.

Cedar's customers are people with complex physical, sensory and learning disabilities. Cedar works with people with congenital and acquired disability, the latter including people who have survived a brain injury often as a result of road traffic accidents, falls or strokes. Customers also include those with emerging needs, such as Autistic Spectrum Disorder and those who have sensory disabilities such as visual impairments.

Cedar uses three key approaches to add value for customers:

- Understanding needs and expectations;
- Tailoring services around individuals; and
- Investing in the talent of staff.

Cedar designs its services based on their knowledge of the needs and expectations of people with disabilities. In the 2007 EFQM Excellence Awards process Cedar won the special prize for Customer Focus. The assessors cited Cedar's innovative and role model approach to identifying and meeting customer needs and expectations through its User Forum. The Forum is an independent, autonomous body of service users which facilitates an open and transparent dialogue with customers. It allows Cedar to gain an invaluable insight into customer needs, expectations and potential requirements. As a result Cedar is able to design and deliver innovative, attractive and sustainable services that are in high demand.

Seven years on, the Forum remains key to Cedar's approach, operating regionally and being core to Cedar's governance structure. The Forum is central to the development of new and innovative service. For example, Back Home a ground-breaking project which is developing and applying brain-neural computer interfaces to assist people with complex disabilities to control their environment through the power of thought.



All Cedar services are person centred programmes being tailor-made to meet individual demands and preferences. Services improve quality of life for whole families and add value to individual members. For example, Andrew and Michael are eight year old twins; they live at home with their parents and older brothers. Both have significant disabilities and complex health care needs. The whole family works hard to keep the boys happy, safe and well. Specially trained Cedar staff provide customised play therapy two or three times a week helping the boys to have fun and giving their parents a break to spend time with their other children and attend to other things. This personalised support provides a lifeline for the whole family, adding value week by week.

Cedar is a Gold Standard Investor in People Champion recognising that its ability to add value to customers is dependent upon the talents of staff delivering services. Cedar invests

significantly in training and development and in ensuring that their people have the necessary resources and autonomy to deliver services that exceed expectations. Skills and resources around new and emerging technology are a good example of this. Following her strokes, Pamela developed upside down and backwards reading and writing. She was finding it impossible to produce legible course work for her Diploma. Cedar's ICT specialist was able to develop a computer programme which reversed the text Paula inputted, enabling her to produce work which was easily read by others.

Cedar maintains its customer focus by continually monitoring and reviewing the experiences and perceptions of its service users. This combined with the User Forum, person centeredness and investment in its people delivers added value for customers now and provides the bedrock for this to continue in the future.

About Cedar Foundation

The Cedar Foundation is a leading voluntary organisation in Northern Ireland focusing on inclusion for people with disabilities. Cedar is celebrating more than 70 years of delivering ground-breaking services to adults and children with disabilities.

Cedar employs 330 staff to deliver services 24 hours a day; 365 days a year and has a projected turnover of £9.4 million in 2014/15.

Cedar uses the EFQM Excellence Model, Investors in People, Investors in Volunteers and ISO 9001:2008 to pursue excellence. The EFQM Excellence Model and RADAR logic are central to how Cedar does business. The organisation is a previous winner of the 2005 Northern Ireland, 2007 European and 2013 Ireland Excellence Awards.