

# cool2care

for families with disabled children



**Cool2Care is a Social Enterprise** which supports families with disabled children and young people. The objective of Cool2Care is to recruit, train and place skilled care-workers and personal assistants to help look after disabled children at home and support them to engage with activities in the local community.

The enterprise launched in January 2008 as a pilot in Surrey and Birmingham – two contrasting areas in England. Following successful operation, the model will be replicated across other areas in England where there is a need. Profits generated will be used to help families with disabled children.

The enterprise is consistent with government direction to restructure health and social care services focusing on innovation and choice.

The business plan for Cool2Care won a top award from London Business School at the Global Social Venture Competition in 2007.



# Strategic Goal

## Increase the amount of high quality skilled support for families with disabled children and young people.

### The Social Need

Care support for disabled children is a widespread issue in the UK. Sourcing care to help at home for families is extremely difficult. Varying hours may be required, particular understanding of the needs of disabled children is important, the costs are high.

The need for help may last into teenage and adult years. Now that 98% of disabled children live at home rather than in residential care, parents need more support, both inside and outside the home.

The impact on families who cannot find or afford childcare for their disabled child can be devastating. Caring can last for many years, resulting in physical and mental stress for the parents and siblings, income loss, relationship damage and lower levels of development in the child.

There is a widespread consensus amongst government, professionals, charities and parents that existing support falls far short of what families really need.

### Proposed Solution

Cool2Care provides a service to parents and young people directly that recruits, trains and places skilled childcare workers to work with disabled children in a family or community setting. It offers a level of assurance and choice to parents who can select the care-worker for themselves. Cool2Care acts in a 'matchmaker' agency role, linking family and care-worker who will agree terms of employment.

The enterprise is complemented by initiatives to drive up the demand from families and supply of care-workers and personal assistants. To boost demand, Cool2Care provides communication to parents on the availability of childcare, the benefits, and potential ways to pay for and manage it (e.g. via disability/carer allowances and Local Authority Direct Payments support schemes).



To attract supply, Cool2Care invests in targeting selected potential workforce segments, encouraging them to choose caring for disabled children as temporary work or as a permanent profession. Example target segments include gap-year students, nursery teaching assistants, mainstream childcare staff and au pairs or nannies.

Quality lies at the heart of Cool2Care. All care-workers receive training designed in collaboration with a children's hospice, so they are equipped and confident to deal with all the major disabilities and home issues that may arise. The guidance given to care-workers is consistent with CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection) national minimum standards. All care-workers will be thoroughly screened, and subject to an enhanced Criminal Records Bureau check prior to placement with a family.

### Caring for Disabled Children

- 770,000 disabled children in UK
- Physical, learning and behavioural disabilities
- 80% of families with disabled children experience high levels of stress
- 60% live in or at the margins of poverty
- 34% live in households where there is no adult in paid work
- Parents with a disabled child are 33% more likely to divorce or separate than those without.

Sources: Contact a Family & University of Leeds, 2006

## Objectives

- **Increase the number of families requesting and receiving home or community-based support**
- **Increase the number of skilled care-workers choosing to work with disabled children and their families**
- **Provide an efficient agency-style matching capability of demand and supply across England**
- **Generate income from agency fees charged for the matching service.**

## Model

The Social Enterprise is legally registered as a Community Interest Company (CIC). This is a business with twin aims for profit and social return defined in its Memorandum and Articles. The profits from Cool2Care are used to help families with disabled children, by supporting charities and other initiatives that support such families.

Two English Local Authority areas have been chosen as pilot sites. Surrey is the first site, Birmingham is the second site. Once the model is proven and profitable, it will be replicated across other areas in England.

Each area is run by a team of staff based in the local community. Their jobs are to:

- Recruit care-workers and personal assistants
- Perform assessment visits to requesting families
- Present a choice of candidates to each family; families can interview and choose the most suitable
- Coordinate training sessions.

Focus and investment is placed on ways to maintain care-worker loyalty, increase motivation and share experiences. Central infrastructure costs are kept to the minimum required to operate as a Social Enterprise.



## Outcomes

Cool2Care improves on the current provision through state or private sources. It gives parents greater choice and flexibility over the person supplied and the hours worked.

For families that are assessed as in need and then receive an allowance or a Direct Payment, Cool2Care makes it easier to find the right person. Currently it can be difficult since conventional agencies often do not understand the specialised needs of families and disabled children.

Other means of locating suitable staff through advertising or the Internet are unreliable.

The benefits to families that do have successful care support vary by family. For example:

- The child receives greater stimulation, through play and social interaction
- The primary earner has less stress and is less likely to suffer career damage or income loss
- The secondary earner has greater chance to work, earn income, or get a break from caring
- The parental relationship is more likely to survive and avoid break-up
- Siblings can get the parental attention they need.

## Schedule

- 2007: Funding secured, start-up phase**
- 2008: Two English pilots underway**
- 2009: Replication starts across England**
- 2010: Replication complete**

## Financials

As a CIC Social Enterprise, there are twin objectives for financial and social return on investment. Major cost items are staff salaries, care-worker training, plus marketing and recruitment costs. Revenue is generated from successful family placements and care-worker training.

Detailed financial projections are available on request.

## Partnership and Investment

Enquiries are welcome from any individual or organisation interested in this new social enterprise, with a view to potential partnership or investment. Please direct enquiries by e-mail to [info@cool2care.co.uk](mailto:info@cool2care.co.uk)

## Curriculum Vitae

Philip Conway is the leader of this social enterprise aimed at improving childcare for families with disabled children. He has worked for IBM for 20 years in various international roles, in particular management, strategic planning, marketing and business transformation. He spent four years working in IBM Asia Pacific HQ, based in Tokyo. For four years he has been trustee of the UK based charity 'Contact a Family', that provides support and information to families with disabled children.

Philip has a BA in Mathematics from Oxford University, and an Executive MBA from London Business School. He lives in Surrey, UK, and is married with two sons, the elder of which has physical and learning disabilities.



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