

Galway Centre
for Independent Living



Your Service
Your Choice

Foreword...

As Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Galway Centre for Independent Living, I am delighted to present this Strategic Plan for the three years to 2010.

This is the first Strategic Plan for Galway Centre for Independent Living, which builds on our Mission, “to provide relevant and meaningful, person-centered services that support the full and equal inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of society.”

Galway Centre for Independent Living was founded in 1994 and I have been involved with the organisation since 1996. In that time I have seen it grow and develop to where we are today. It has changed from being managed on a voluntary basis to where we now have paid staff to manage and coordinate the services we provide to People with Disabilities in Galway, and drive the organisation forward, enabling the achievement of the goals in this Plan.

I would like to thank my fellow Board Members and all those who have been involved with the organisation, past and present, for their continuing hard work and dedication. For those who are no longer with us, I would like you to take a moment to remember them.

We look forward to the next three years which will be an exciting time for Galway Centre for Independent Living, seeing it through the achievement of its first Strategic Plan.

Jack Callanan,
Chairperson
Galway Centre for Independent Living



Jack Callanan,
Chairperson



Elaine Kennedy, Service Co-ordinator
Elaine O'Boyle, Administrator

The Philosophy of Independent Living

Essentially Independent Living is living just like everybody else - having opportunities to make decisions that affect one's life, the ability to pursue activities of one's own choosing - limited only in the same way as one's non-disabled peers. Independent Living is about enabling people with disabilities to take control of their lives. It is also a way of life and a state of mind. Moreover, it is a social and political movement that is changing both the way services are provided, and the role people with disabilities play in society. Independent Living is about people with disabilities deciding what they want for themselves.

Another important aspect of the Philosophy of Independent Living is that it promotes organisations of people with disabilities, rather than organisations for people with disabilities.

Adolf Ratzka, a leader in the European Independent Living movement offers this description of Independent Living:

The right of all persons, regardless of age, type or extent of disability to live in the community, as opposed to living in an institution; have the same range of choices as everyone else in housing, transportation, education and employment; participate in the social, economic and political life of their communities; have a family; live as responsible respected members of their communities, with all the duties, privileges that this entails, and unfold their potential.

Independent Living is about choice, empowerment, independence, rights, options and self-determination. Independent Living refers to quality of life with assistance. This requires the existence of a Personal Assistance Service - one which is controlled and managed by people with disabilities. It does not matter how significant a person's disability is; they can live an independent life, if they desire it, with access to the right supports and back-up.

History of the Independent Living Movement

1972, UCLA Berkley, California, USA.

• Its journey commenced in Berkeley, California in 1972 and the new philosophy of Independent Living quickly spread to many European countries.

1992, Dublin.

• In March 1992 the philosophy of Independent Living was finally brought to Dublin by a core group of individuals with disabilities, these individuals set up the first Centre for Independent Living with the main aim of ensuring that all people with disabilities can achieve Independent Living and full participation in all areas of society

1994, Galway.

• The Independent Living Movement came to Galway on the 24th June 1994, giving Galway the distinction of being the first centre to be set up outside the Capital. Over the years in excess of 27 other Centres for Independent Living have been set up in Ireland. Initially the only means available to provide a Personal Assistant Service was through a FÁS Community Employment Scheme. This service proved invaluable to those fortunate enough to avail of it, as they experienced for the first time the potential of Independent Living, despite the limitations. Since its establishment, the Galway Centre for Independent Living has worked in the Citizenship Model of disability as against the traditional Medical Model. People with disabilities are the real experts as to their requirement “nothing about us without us”.

Current Service Rates for Galway Centre for Independent Living

- 37 Clients receive Personal Assistant Service
- 53 Personal Assistants employed
- 961 Hours of service provided per week
- 64 Employees in total
- 50 Students receive computer training per month on average
- 62 Clients use the transport service monthly



John Conneely, Leader

Strategic Plan for Galway Centre for Independent Living Ltd.

This document comprises a strategic plan for Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd. It presents a series of fundamental statements relating to Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd.'s vision, mission, values and objectives; and sets out Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd.'s proposed strategies, goals and action programs.

Vision

The promoters' vision of Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd. is:

Every individual has the right, responsibility and opportunity to achieve their full potential in society.

Mission Statement

The central purpose and role of Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd. is:

To provide relevant and meaningful, person-centered services that support the full and equal inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of society.

Values Statement

The values governing Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd.'s development will include the following:

- We provide user-driven services that are relevant and meaningful
- Our services are delivered with respect, integrity and accountability
- All our activities are conducted to the highest professional standard
- We will raise the standards within the sector by being forward thinking and innovative
- All our work is underpinned by the philosophy of Independent Living



Helen Jackson, Manager
Sean Healy, Accountant



Emer Ryder, PA
Marian Greene, Leader

Organisational Objectives

Longer term objectives of Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd. are summarized as:

- Increase Service Reach within our core activity which is the provision of a Personal Assistant service.
- Attract Board members who will broaden our range of expertise, to expand and balance the Board behind Galway Centre for Independent Living.
- Recruit and retain well trained and motivated staff within a supportive and developing working environment.
- Adopt a comprehensive communications strategy that will enhance the profile and reputation of Galway Centre for Independent Living.
- Adopt an IT strategy which will provide support to users of our services.
- Seek to identify and meet emerging and developing services for people with disabilities.

Major Goals

The following key targets will be achieved by Galway Centre For Independent Living Ltd. over the next 3 years:

- Continue to increase Personal Assistant Service availability in Galway City and County.
- Continue to increase Accessible Computer Suite Services.
- Maintain a highly professional image which allows for continued growth and diversification.
- Achieve a Quality Award to ensure we provide the best possible service.
- Continue to increase Universally Accessible Transport Service.
- Continue to improve Communication with all stakeholders.

Galway Centre for Independent Living



What Our Clients Say...

"I am confident that I can pick up the phone or drop into the office, and the staff at Galway Centre for Independent Living will handle any query I may have. They allow me to manage my own service flexibly, providing support, if I need it, to ensure that I have full control and choice over my Personal Assistant service"

John Conneely, Leader with Galway Centre for Independent Living

"Prior to getting a Personal Assistant from Galway Centre for Independent Living I was unable to shop, attend mass or go swimming. The Personal Assistant service Galway Centre for Independent Living provides now enables me to live independently"

Josephine Gibbons, Leader with Galway Centre for Independent Living

"I have always found the Galway Centre for Independent Living very supportive with the management and training of my Personal Assistants. I also feel I get the best value for money from my funding through the Galway Centre for Independent Living"

Patrick Fitzgerald, Leader with Galway Centre for Independent Living

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