



GNG Healthcare

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The GNG Group has established itself as an international brand leader in the health-care, sports, safety & lifestyle sectors, offering specialist foam conversion for any industry requiring foam-based solutions. Technical Director, Darren Potterton, talks about how GNG has been operating over the last few months.

Q&A

Darren Potterton Technical Director, GNG

I operate in a very fast paced environment and have a varied role. I have a number of key focuses including Healthcare procurement, product design, pressure testing and key account management.

TM: At the height of the pandemic, what actions did GNG take to help the NHS as it worked to control the outbreak?

DP: After discussions with our key accounts in the Sports and Consumer mattress divisions, and with their full support, we paused all production prior to lockdown and transferred all capacity to Healthcare, enabling us to predict the increase in demand. All 100 staff were focused on the medical division, and split into three shifts, working 24/7. It has been an amazing effort by all concerned. We increased production ten fold in those following weeks.

TM: What challenges did GNG face during those months?

DP: Meeting demand to support the NHS supply chain, achieved with outstanding staff morale and teamwork. Not one team member refused to work, or change shifts. Suppliers such as Vitafoam reversed their decision to close and continued production

to support the NHS supply chain. Fabric suppliers were paying for air freight to support urgent supplies. Just incredible support from all corners; bag and zip suppliers to IT and FLT gas supplies. Everyone paid a crucial role in keeping us operating at unprecedented levels. Staff morale was through the roof; we had PPE, and supported them with lunches, fruit & veg boxes, supermarket vouchers - just something to say 'thanks' every week.



TM: How did GNG overcome the challenges?

DP: We reviewed our manufacturing processes which helped increase foam cutting times by 40%. We reconfigured the Sports Division's manufacturing process to have an additional line for medical production in a matter of days, and extra storage for foam blocks. Several 40ft trailers were positioned on site and 40k sq.ft became a full medical line. We deployed staff over 3 shifts to ensure social distancing and their safety, installed hand sanitizing stations at key points in the factory, signage on floors and walls to reinforce the message and completed covid risk assessment for all areas.

TM: Now the initial outbreak has been controlled, where will GNG now focus its efforts and how is it adapting to the new normal?

DP: By restarting Consumer and Sports, working two shifts to catch up with the backlog and demand. This is up 40% on some

consumer accounts, especially major e-tailers. US orders for Sports have increased and we are seeing extra demand for home training equipment. Medical is falling closer to normal levels, but we have new sales enquiries from the UK and overseas, so sales are still very buoyant.

TM: For those in the market for pressure care mattresses and cushions, is GNG able to supply? And why should distributors and healthcare providers buy from GNG?

DP: GNG has a proven history in supplying the healthcare sector with quality products in a timely manner. We have full in-house capabilities from fabric cutting, screen printing, sewing and welding options for covers, as well as state of the art foam conversion machinery. During the terrible events which have unfolded in the last 3-4 months, we have shown that we have both the capability and the willingness to supply volumes that have increased exponentially, without impacting our quality and service. We take pride in being able to meet and exceed our customers' expectations.

