



Home Modification Information Clearinghouse

Never Stand Still

Built Environment

Newsletter

Edition 38 | 8th December 2015



From the Director

Welcome to the Christmas edition of the HMinfo newsletter. In this edition we try to provide some timely updates on fire safety and recent achievements by members of our research team.

Joanne Quinn has been working tirelessly to produce two new publications regarding fire safety:

- [Summary Bulletin: Fire Safety - Smoke Alarms 2nd ed](#)
- [Consumer Factsheet: Fire Safety - Smoke Alarms](#)

These publications supplement our existing [Summary Bulletin: Home Fire Safety Egress](#) and discuss the considerations for fire safety within the home and specifically addresses smoke alarm modifications for older people and people with disabilities. Procedures for fire and other emergencies should always include provisions for the early fire warning systems of people with disability. For instance, an intense fire has destroyed kitchen-dining facilities and several bedrooms in a disabled residential care complex at Ashmore on the Gold Coast in November, the fire started in a bedroom and started early in the morning while residents were still asleep.

Importantly, their publication is timely given one of the strongest El Niño's on record, with the weather predicted to be hot and dry during the end of the year. Furthermore, temperatures in many parts of Australia have consistently been well above average. Unfortunately [older people and people with disability are at higher risk of being injured or not surviving a fire in their home.](#)

Within this newsletter you will also find a summary of the three years' work conducted by Phillippa Carnemolla on the before and after impact of Home modifications which demonstrates a significant improvement in quality of life and an average reduction in care of 42%. Phillippa worked closely with Scope Access and the Statewide Home Modification. This collaboration between service providers and researchers was what made the work possible. The work was funded using an Australian Postgraduate Award (APA scholarship) in combination with an *Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)* top up scholarship. Fred Zmudski is a very experienced health economist who generously donated his expertise for the economic analysis and provided extra guidance, so please stay tuned for some more Industry and Consumer publications we are planning to share in 2016.

For noting on your calendar, Home Modifications Australia (MOD.A) is planning a National Home Modification Conference for Thursday 28 - Friday 29 April at the National Convention Centre, Canberra, please register as soon as possible. The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse is a valued member

of the conference steering committee and we anticipate have the broadest representation and highest quality discussion about the importance of Home Modifications for enabling and sustaining consumer and person directed care within Australia.

Lastly, on behalf of everyone at the Home Modification Information Clearinghouse, I would like to wish you and your families a safe, fun filled and relaxing Festive Season and a Happy New Year.

HMinfo Research

Summary Bulletin: Fire Safety – Smoke Alarms 2nd ed

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse have recently published two papers relating to fire safety and smoke alarms. The report: "*Summary Bulletin: Fire Safety - Smoke Alarms 2nd ed*" responds to recent Australian regulatory changes for smoke alarms in dwellings, advances in smoke alarm devices, and current smoke alarm recommendations of fire authorities and researchers. It examines the function and use of contemporary smoke alarm devices and details the applicable national and state/territory regulations for different dwelling types.

Recommendations are made for smoke alarm selection, placement and maintenance, to detect fire smoke whilst avoiding nuisance alarms; alert residents of all ages and abilities when fire smoke is detected; and ensure reliable smoke alarm functioning in a fire.

[Read Publication](#)

Consumer Factsheet: Fire Safety - Smoke Alarms

The accompanying document titled; "*Consumer Factsheet: Fire Safety - Smoke Alarms*" provides residents with information on how they can use smoke alarms more effectively in their home, especially if they might take longer to respond to a fire, or need assistance to safely evacuate.

This publication outlines fire services' and researchers' recommendations for the selection, placement and maintenance of smoke alarms for residents of all ages and abilities, and includes a smoke alarm checklist.

[Read Publication](#)

Home Modification Resources

Journal paper review – Journal of Universal Design in the Built Environment (JUDBE)

The latest peer-reviewed journal in the Universal Design space has recently launched, publishing its inaugural Issue in November 2015. The Journal of Universal Design in the Built Environment (JUDBE). HMinfo Director, Catherine Bridge has co-authored a keynote paper in the first issue. The paper is titled "*Older Australian Out and About in the Global Context: Their bathroom Preferences and What This Means for Standards Development and Accessible Tourism*", authored by Catherine Bridge, Alicia Mintzes and Oya Demirbilek.

The primary objective of JUDBE is to publish up-to-date, high quality and original research papers which offer multi-disciplinary analysis concerning universal design. JUDBE will be published biannually, and will cover aspects of universal design and the built environment in areas including (but not limited to); architecture, universal design, housing, sustainability, tourism & built environment, disaster management, innovation, landscape architecture, planning and development.

Website review – <http://moda2016.org.au>

Mod.A will be hosting the Home Modifications Australia National Conference in Canberra on the 28-29 April in 2016. Registrations to attend are now open, and the Call for abstracts will remain open until the 22 January 2016.

This years' Conference - Modifying the Home: Building-Inclusion-Practice - will highlight the latest research and evidence-base available in the home modification sector, bring together some of the world's most prominent experts in the field, highlight innovative service providers and provide an opportunity for delegates to inform future policy directions in aged and disability care. The HMinfo team will be participating in the conference and will be presenting the results of our most recent research projects.

This Conference is an opportunity for delegates to hear about the latest in home modifications and to network and share their knowledge with other providers in the sector. The programme will include (international) plenary speakers, oral presentations across different themes and an extensive trade and exhibition component. The website, <http://moda2016.org.au/>, is dedicated to providing all information about the conference, including speakers, registrations, submissions and accommodation etc...

Events

Home Modification Webinar - Case study: Person with a neurological condition - 16th Dec 2015

This webinar aims to provide an overview of:

- Process for assessment of person, their equipment and carer; and their activities/tasks
- Process for evaluating the environment
- Intervention options
- Resources to assist practice

Details

Harness the Possibilities: Enriching lives in changing times - 17th Feb 2016

Resourcing Families is holding a regional conference to discuss topics such as:

- What could the NDIS mean for people?
- Will individualised funding and more flexibility result in meaningful and authentic lives?
- What is a good life and how can people be supported to achieve it?
- What are the possibilities, as well as the challenges and barriers for transformation?

Details

WORKSHOP: Environmental Home Modifications - The Basics - CANBERRA - 26th Feb 2016

This is a two day workshop for Occupational Therapists covering the knowledge and skills base required to prescribe environmental modifications in a residential setting. This workshop is targeted at Occupational Therapists who have minimal to medium experience in home modifications and is suitable for new graduates, for those returning to clinical work or changing area of practice, and for those who would like a refresher.

Details

Ramps and Rails Workshop - Canberra - 7th Mar 2016

The workshop aims to provide occupational therapy practitioners with:

- Knowledge about broad principles for designing internal and external ramps for domestic homes
- Practical information on the process of measuring up areas for the design and installation of internal and external ramps
- Information about resources to assist with measuring and designing ramps
- Information about current literature and research influencing the prescription of grabrails
- Knowledge about the biomechanics and measurement techniques to inform clinical reasoning processes for grabrail prescription
- Information about resources to assist with prescribing grabrails and handrails
- Knowledge about the relevance and application of the Australian Standards, the Disability Discrimination Act and the Premises Standards for grabrail, handrail and ramp design in domestic environments

Details

Home Modifications Australia (MOD.A) National Conference - 28th Apr 2016

The theme for the Home Modifications Conference 2016 is 'Modifying the Home - BUILDING INCLUSION PRACTICE'. Delegates will have the opportunity to hear about and share information about international best practice in home modifications.

Conference presenters and exhibitors will showcase innovation in modifying the homes of older people and people with disability, while keynote speakers and panel sessions will address the big issues of how reform policy will impact on the sector, how accreditation will guarantee quality, and what providers will need to do to meet the challenges of working in an individualised, consumer-driven service market.

The conference will be an opportunity to meet with providers from across the country as well as with administrators, suppliers and leading academics. Delegates will be able to take stock of the health of the sector in Australia and internationally, and discuss how services will need to adapt to the changes still occurring in disability and aged care. Presentations will deal with core challenges of an increasingly diverse market, and exhibitors will demonstrate the application of new technology to increase the functional capacity of individuals in their home.

Details

Publications by HMinfo Team

HMinfo research

Recently completed doctoral thesis in Home modifications

Phillippa Carnemolla, a member of the HMinfo team since 2010, has been conducting her PhD research into home modifications and their impact on caregiving and quality of life. Her doctorate has recently been conferred with a graduation ceremony planned for early 2016.

Phillippa's work investigated the experiences of 157 Home and Community Care clients, and measured how home modifications impacted both formal and informal care. She also measured the effect that home modifications have on health-related quality of life. The results have been significant, with home modifications found to reduce the need for caregiving and also corresponding to increased levels of health-related quality of life. These thesis findings are currently being written up into a number of peer-reviewed journal articles which, when published, will be shared via the Home Modification Information Clearinghouse.

HMinfo Team



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Any suggestions or feedback you may have on our newsletter would be greatly appreciated, so please feel free to contact us at hminfo@unsw.edu.au. To unsubscribe from future HMinfo newsletters, please click [unsubscribe](#).

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