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Great Lakes HMMS – Producing great Aluminium Ramps for the HMMS Industry

Great Lakes HMMS is now producing ramps for the HMMS in NSW at very competitive rates. The ramps can be custom made to suit each clients' specifications and delivered anywhere in NSW. The ramps are of a very high quality with the following features:

- Full Aluminium—will not rot or rust
- A specialised slip resistant material on the deck to enhance the walk surface
- Minimal parts for ease of installation and less confusion
- Ramp, handrails and kerb comply with the Australian Standard AS1428
- The ramp does not damage the property/dwelling when installed or removed
- No unsightly hazardous bolts/screws in deck area
- Certified by engineers
- Easy installation in hours
- Height adjustable
- Easily adapted to site conditions
- Light weight in comparison to steel
- Quick and easy construction
- Reusable and relocatable
- Little or no maintenance

If HMMS are interested, the Builder will need to supply Great Lakes HMMS with a diagram of the ramp to enable Great Lakes to provide the HMMS with a quote.

For further information on the ramp and prices, please contact Ian Wearne, Building Service Manager, Great Lakes HMMS on 0412 443 473 . Please note prices will vary according to specifications and delivery.



Above left to right:
Dean Little, Steve Hoursburgh and Ian Wearne





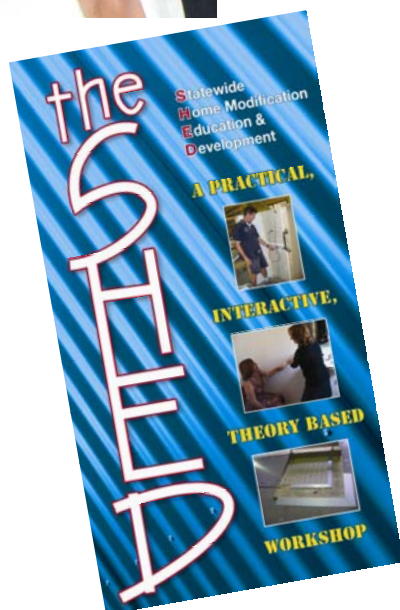
State Council News

Stacey Sheppard-Smith, Executive Officer, NSW HMMS State Council

‘The SHED’ Series of Workshops

The NSW HMMS State Council has completed the series of The Shed Workshops for 2009. The evaluation forms displayed a high level of satisfaction with the workshop. In total 16 workshops were held across varying regions in NSW with a total of 485 people trained.

The NSW HMMS State Council would like to extend their sincere thanks to all the HMMS who provided State Council with the use of their sheds and assisted with the co-ordination of the training. Additionally the NSW HMMS State Council would like to acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the State Council staff for making sure the workshops were a great success. A big THANK YOU to all involved!!



Overview of Training for the

Overview of Training 2008-2009
FYE



- 2008 Conference
- MDS and Output Training
- Legally Speaking Workshop
- The Shed Series of Workshops

Workshop	Number of Delegates
2008 Conference	268
MDS and Output Training	38
Legally Speaking Workshop	100
The Shed Workshops	485
RTO Workshop Nov 2008	25
Total	916

The NSW HMMS State Council is committed to providing capacity building initiatives via training to all HMMS and referring OTs in NSW. From 2008-2009 FYE, a total of 916 people have been trained via State Council Workshops and Conferences. As noted in the table above the largest proportion of people trained was through The Shed Series of Workshops. State Council is currently in the process of planning their training calendar for next year and HMMS will be able to view all the dates on their Yearly Planner distributed to HMMS in December 2009.

Non-Recurrent Funding and MDS Reporting

Claudia Kennedy from DADHC has clarified with State Council when a HMMS has received **non-recurrent funding for jobs on their waiting lists** they must report the MDS in the same manner as they would for a normal HACC job. When a HMMS is allocated **Non Recurrent Occupational Therapy Brokerage Funding** from State Council, the OT hours should be reported as Allied Health Hours under the HMMS Service ID for modification.

Non-Recurrent Update

The NSW HMMS State Council is still awaiting advice from DADHC on the progress of their proposal for additional non-recurrent funding to reduce HMMS waiting lists in NSW. The proposals were submitted to the Ministers Office with DADHC's Annual Supplement and are still being reviewed. State Council has had an incredible amount of feedback from HMMS regarding client complaints as their work has been on hold due to the lack of availability of funding. State Council encourages all services to implement their priority tools and ensure that their Complaint Handling Policies are up to date. If you require a Priority Rating Tool for your HMMS, State Council has a number of examples on file for HMMS to use and implement. If you require a Priority Rating Tool, please contact Stacey Sheppard-Smith, exec.officer@nswhmms.org

Legally Speaking Workshop

Via Regional Consultations completed by the NSW Home Modification and Maintenance Services (HMMS) State Council and from extensive feedback provided by the HMMS industry and referring Occupational Therapists, the NSW HMMS State Council ran a state wide half day legal workshop titled 'Legally Speaking ~ Your Home Modification Legal Questions Answered' on the 31.03.09.

The workshop was presented by Tim Smyth, Health Lawyer and Paul Vergotis, Planning and Development Lawyer from DLA Phillips Fox and aimed to ensure the most appropriate and correct legal information was imparted to the HMMS industry and referring Occupational Therapists regarding the provision of environmental modifications in the home. In total 100 delegates attended the workshop. A Legal Fact Sheet and information endorsed by DLA Phillips Fox will be distributed to HMMS later in the year.



Frequently Asked HMMS Questions

Quoting Ramps for DVA

Question

Would State Council please be able to clarify for Home Mods Services the position when quoting for DVA ramps at full cost recovery. Our Service recently sent through a quote to DVA for a ramp including GST for consideration and approval. Today I received a phone call from DVA who advises we should not be charging DVA GST for ramp jobs. Any help would be very much appreciated, as I was always under the impression we charge DVA full cost recovery + GST. *Jo Pedder, Lake Macquarie Newcastle HMMS*

Answer

When HMMS are providing quotes to DVA for the construction of ramps, the HMMS is not to include GST in the quote. The ATO has ruled that as the wheelchair ramp is specifically designed for people with an illness or disability, and is not widely used by people without an illness or disability; its supply and installation is a GST-free supply of a medical aid or appliance under subsection 38-45(1) of the GST Act.

A Fresh Look for the NSW HMMS State Council Website

The NSW HMMS State Council website is currently receiving a facelift and will be available to HMMS and the general public within the coming months.

Paid financial members will have access to the private section of the website, with the ability to download resources and send all applications for funding to State Council electronically. HMMS will be notified of their login details once the site is ready.



Does Your Constitution Reflect Your Non-Profit Status?

A non-profit organisation is one which is not operating for the profit or gain of its individual members. This applies both while the organisation is operating and when it winds up. Non-Profit's Constitutions must reflect this in their Constitutions and the following clauses are recommended to reflect their not for profit status:

Non-profit clause

'The assets and income of the organisation shall be applied solely in furtherance of its above-mentioned objects and no portion shall be distributed directly or indirectly to the members of the organisation except as bona fide compensation for services rendered or expenses incurred on behalf of the organisation.'

Dissolution clause

'In the event of the organisation being dissolved, the amount that remains after such dissolution and the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities shall be transferred to another organisation with similar purposes which is not carried on for the profit or gain of its individual members.'



HMMS Staff Profile

20 questions with

Phil Oliver, Macarthur HMMS

How long been with HMMS? 3 Months

Builder how many years? Started apprenticeship in 1976 as a cabinet maker, spent 10 years at the Air Force as a carpenter and left Air Force as an aircraft engineer in July 2000, worked for New Era Homes in Camden for 10 years leading up to position at Macarthur HMMS

Family consists of? Wife, 1 Son, 1 Daughter and 1 grandson (2 months old)

Favourite holiday destination? Morrocco (still to happen)

Favourite food? Roast Lamb

Book reading at present? Definitely a non reader

Favourite movie? Braveheart

Best piece of advice you have been given? Do not get married and do not have kids.

Last \$5 what would you buy? Pie and a Beer

Favourite type of music? Rock and Roll

Play an instrument? No

Play a sport/ follow which sport/ team you follow?

Jousting, love anything to do with horses. I own 9 horses and keep them on my 10acre property at Camden where I have been for 3 years. Note -To see Phil in action jousting against international competition go to: YouTube ironfest jousting tournament Lithgow April 2009. Phil is the competitor in the green and gold.

Your moral in life is...? Do your best always and never make/ accept excuses. Go hard or go home.

Type of car you drive? Nissan Patrol 4WD

Dumbest decision you have made is when I? Leaving the Air Force, it was a great job with a great team.

Tea or coffee or hot chocolate? A good strong coffee

Shopping basket or trolley? For what – Shopping? What's that?



Keith's Corner

Keith Stevenson, Specialist Technical Officer, NSW HMMS State Council

Lifting Pavers

Ever had problems removing that stubborn first paver to enable you to remove a number of pavers to concrete a footing underneath the pavers to support a handrail post? HMMS usually find the need to remove a paver in the middle of a paved area – why are they never on the edges??

Here is a small tip that could save you time. This method does not damage the corners of the paver that usually happens when tradespeople attack the paver with a long screwdriver when trying to remove and lever the paver out. Follow the steps below to remove the paver without damaging it:

1. Purchase a good quality toilet plunger from the supermarket/hardware
2. Wet the paver that needs to be lifted
3. Press down firmly on the plunger in the center of the paver
4. Lift the plunger with the paver attached



Portable Pipe Press

Ever had trouble squashing the top of those vertical post supports for your handrails to gain the 270 degrees to meet AS1428? I've come across an ingenious innovation to help you out...

The team at Auburn HMMS in Sydney has developed a low cost, portable and safe method to crush the tops of their posts on site. The handyman were sick of bashing the pipe with a sledge hammer to crush the pipe and this process often ended in injury to the handyman and a lot of noise in the process (from the hammer - and the handyman!).

The method the team has adopted is to use an everyday car jack to squeeze the pipe against a metal box section. Please see attached photos. This is the third prototype they are testing and have had great feedback and results in the field. It is still a work in progress to perfect the onsite pipe crusher. The total cost of this project should be around the \$50 mark. The car jack was purchased at Super Cheap Auto for \$25 and the steel section cost around \$25.

Well done to the team at Auburn HMMS. If any other services are creating new and innovative ways to service their clients please get in touch with me so as I can share it with the rest of the State's HMMS.





OT Corner

Margaret Neuss, Specialist Occupational Therapist,
NSW HMMS State Council

The Art of Prescribing Grabrails – there's more to it than you may think!

This is Part 1 in a series of articles on the role of the Occupational Therapist when prescribing grabrails in the home environment

On the face of it, prescribing grabrails appears to be an easy task - but it is not as simple as it may first seem. There are many factors to be considered in order to meet the specific needs of individuals. Unfortunately, there is no magic formula and "one size" does not fit all! Indeed, it is determining the specific functional needs of the individual that is critical. A comprehensive, wholistic assessment of the client and/or their carer by an OT within their home environment is therefore essential prior to grabrail prescription.

Why not just prescribe grabrails as per AS 1428 Suite of Standards? The AS 1428 Suite of Standards applies to access in public facilities by multiple users. The dimensions in the standards are based on adults who are independent users of such facilities. The standard does not take into consideration the specific needs of individuals, carers or bariatric clients.

Why an Occupational Therapy assessment? The OT operates from a theoretical framework that examines the interaction or "fit" that occurs between a person, the task and their environment.

"This includes an understanding of specific diseases and disabilities; the effects of diseases and disabilities over a person's lifespan; and how these diseases and disabilities may influence the performance of tasks within different environments. This allows the OT to determine the impact of the individual's disability on their functioning. The interaction of all of these factors is a unique and dynamic process."

(OT AUSTRALIA Position Paper – The Unique Role of the Occupational Therapist in the Prescription of Home Modifications)

The Occupational Therapist also operates from a framework that every person and every environment is unique regardless of commonalities. Therefore, when prescribing grabrails, the OT must take into consideration a wide range of intrinsic and extrinsic factors as part of the assessment process. These include, but are in no way limited to, the following:

- Client considerations such as grip strength, functional reach, range of movement, muscle strength, mobility status & equipment used, endurance/fatigue, height, weight, age, cognitive ability, pre-existing medical conditions, used alone or with carer, language barriers, cultural/social values & confidence undertaking specific tasks
- Environmental considerations such as height of the toilet, access and layout of the home, type of dwelling, floor surfaces, lighting, available space, structural elements, ventilation and weather conditions
- Activities and tasks including such as method of transfers, usual habits/routines, sequencing, assistive technology needed to modify the task
- Other eg other people in the household, ownership of the property, financial status, AS 1428 Suite of Standards, re-sale value of the property and who will be undertaking the work

The above will all have a significant impact on grabrail placement.

Join me in the next NSW HMMS State Council Newsletter for Part 2 of this riveting discussion where the OT assessment process for grabrail prescription will be discussed more fully...



State Council News

Theresa Crawford, Executive Assistant, NSW HMMS State Council

Weblogics – HMMS Industry Specific Database & Job Maintenance System

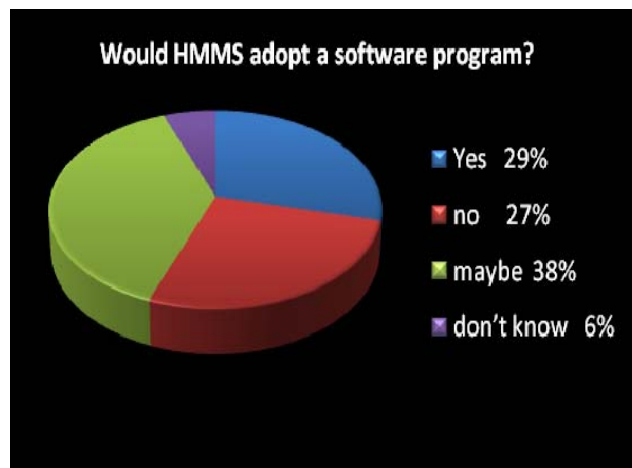
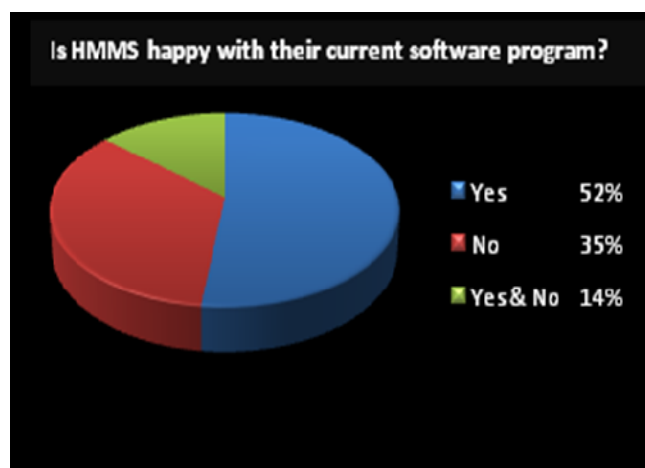
The NSW HMMS State Council recently completed surveying all NSW HMMS regarding development of a customised software program specific for the HMMS industry. The survey concluded that a broad range of software programs are currently being utilised by NSW HMM services with varying degrees of functionality and suitability.

At present there are quite a few services using older software programs which have no ongoing support or maintenance. These services expressed to State Council their need for a replacement database and job maintenance system program.

Having previously recognised the need for HMMS industry specific software, State Council has already designed an industry specific data base and job maintenance software system which is now ready for development.

Unfortunately, due to current funding shortfalls, State Council is now unable to continue funding the project. For those services considering a new HMMS specific database and job maintenance system software program now or in the future, an alternative is to collaborate with other HMMS, pool your resources and take on this project as a group.

If you would like more information or would like to express your expression of interest in the project, please contact Therese Crawford at State Council exec.assistant@nswhmms.org.



Attention: Unused Non Recurrent Funds

HMMS who have had non-recurrent funding approved by the NSW HMMS State Council and have not used the funds must return the funds to State Council as soon as possible to allow for the funding to be available to other HMMS.

The following scenarios may apply:

1. The job has been cancelled and is no longer going ahead
2. If a job was part completed and the balance of the work is not going ahead, the HMMS needs to acquit the money used and return the balance to State Council
3. If the client has passed away

Please contact Theresa Crawford at the NSW HMMS State Council exec.assistant@nswhmms.org or ph. 6622 8386 if you still have unused Non Recurrent funds. Thank You.



Sydney CAREX 09

Kate Feain, Promotions Officer, NSW HMMS State Council

The NSW HMMS State Council was asked to trial a large, interactive Home Modifications and Maintenance display at this year's Aged Care CAREX09 expo at Rosehill Gardens, Rosehill Racecourse, Sydney in July.

State Council provided a working portable ramp system, low rise platform lift, innovative displays, an 'HMMS mini-theatre' showing looped home mods DVDs, plus a selection of interactive HMMS supplier displays including Smart/Safe Doors, Ewing Taps, Aurora Sanicare and Lencare.

Available over the two days were a HMMS builder, OT, Handyman, State Council member and staff, along with four industry suppliers.

The response was overwhelmingly positive, with many visitors to the HMMS interactive display over the two days. CAREX management was very impressed with the large amount of interest in Home Mods & Maintenance within the Care Community and the public at large.

The State Council team were very pleased to have many clients visiting and being able to 'have a go' at the ramp, platform lift and many varied products on display, while promoting NSW HMMS. CAREX will be proposing an industry partnership with the NSW HMMS State Council, as per the partnership they have formed with OT Aust NSW & a few other industry organisations. All in all, a very interesting and productive couple of days for the NSW HMMS Industry.

Many thanks to those staff who attended & made it such a success: Phil Zuber, *Auburn Parramatta Holroyd HMMS*, Ian Maxwell, *Wesley HMMS*, Loris Higgins, *Senior OT*, Iain Ewing, *Ewing Taps*, David Peart, *Smart Door*, Stewart Wallace, *Aurora Sanicare* and Richard Drayton from *Lencare* - and of course the boys from Auburn Parramatta Holroyd for being the roadies and lugging all the gear!



**INAUGURAL CONFERENCE FOR
 OT AUSTRALIA NSW-ACT 2009**
 Initiate | Participate | Achieve
 12-13 November, Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre





NSW Statewide Level 3 Corner

Steve Malvern, Project Manager, NSW Statewide Level 3

The 2008 /2009 financial year saw the NSW Statewide Level 3 HMS fund 75 jobs for a total value of \$2,360,858.55 excluding GST and was left with approximately \$800,000 of unfunded projects at years end. NSW Statewide Level 3 would have required approximately \$3.4 million inclusive of overheads if we were to meet the demand for major modifications at this level.

Interestingly, 48 of these 75 modifications were for clients with disabilities under the age 65 and 22 clients were under the age of 16. Our project relied heavily on non-recurrent funds made available through State Council to fund many jobs and it was when these funds were exhausted in June 2009 that we could no longer meet the unprecedented demand for service.

NSW Statewide Level 3 did not receive a new funding agreement until 27th July 2009 and funds weren't made available until 3 August 2009 at which time we had 32 applications on a waiting list for a total value of \$1.26 million. These applications were prioritised in early August and have exhausted the whole years funding. This has resulted in, understandably, many unhappy and frustrated clients one of whom has taken to widening his bathroom door with a chainsaw!!

In the absence of additional recurrent funds at Level 3 or non-recurrent funds at State Council our project cannot consider funding any new applications until the 2010/2011 financial year. NSW Statewide Level 3 encourage services to continue referring through to us in order to demonstrate the huge funding shortfall at this level and not to attempt funding Level 3 clients with Level 1 or 2 funds. DADHC and the Minister are aware of this situation and we remain hopeful that additional funds will be made available to ensure our many needy clients are serviced in an appropriate timeframe.

A Level 2/3 workshop was held in late April where all but three Service Managers attended. The workshop theme is always about consistent and collaborative approach in providing major works whether Level 2 or Level 3 no matter where the job is located throughout the State. As a result of this meeting a new Level 3 Application Form and Panel Consideration Form have been produced and we ask that all new applications include these forms.

Please feel free to call me should you be unsure as to what the NSW Statewide HMS is able to fund or require information in relation to Level 3 policies. Phone: (02) 4937 4555 or kkccstatewide@kkcc.com.au



Level 2/3 Budget Holders
at the Level 2/3
Workshop April 2009

Staff Movements

Desley Murray from Coonamble HMMS

(Western Plains) has resigned from Coonamble HMMS after 5 years of service. Desley's positive contribution to the Central West and Orana Far West Region will be greatly missed. Desley was one of the 'Western Stars' of our Rural & Remote HMMS DVD produced last year. The NSW HMMS State Council wishes Desley all the very best for the future.



Left: Desley celebrating her resignation with a lemonade or two!



Home Modifications Lake Macquarie/Newcastle HMMS

regretfully advise that due to personal circumstances, **David Thomas** will be leaving their Service on 30 October 2009. David started with the Service on 24 January 2000 (and would have been due his 10 years service next year). Throughout this time his dedication to both the Service and clients has been immense. He will be greatly missed by all. All the very best to you David.

OH&S News

National OH&S Laws One Step Closer

Source: Aged and Community Services NSW and ACT Brief Update Issue No.125 – 11th June 2009

Australia is one step closer to having a national Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) system after the latest meeting of the Workplace Relations Ministers' Council (WRMC) on Monday 18 May 2009.

One of the outcomes of this meeting is the agreement to develop a uniform set of OHS laws that will cover all workplaces across Australia.

The responsibility to develop these new laws has been given to Safe Work Australia, who will build the new OHS legislation within the frameworks established by the National Review into Model OHS Laws (the National Review) in late 2008 (see: www.nationalohsreview.gov.au).

Overall the provisions of the new OHS legislation will aim to enhance safety protection for employees and provide employers with greater certainty by creating consistent and uniform national OHS legislation.

Office Of Fair Trading Update

Update Your Building Licence Details Online

Are you interested in saving time and money whenever you need to update your building licence details? The introduction of an online licence renewal system has already delivered time and cost savings for licensees who have taken advantage of the technology. In March this year, the Office of Fair Trading has added a new feature, giving those who renew online the ability to update address, phone/fax and email details at the time of renewal. To save time and money, renew your licence online by following the instructions on your licence renewal form.

Workcover News

Workcover Pocket Guide:

WorkCover NSW has developed a pocket guide aimed specifically at the health and community services sector. The publication - *Working at External Locations* - addresses the safety issues involved with working in locations such as the home of a client or in a public area. Working at an external location presents its own unique set of risks, and factors and issues need to be considered by both employers and employees as part of a risk management exercise. Please go to the following link for further information:
<http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/Publications/Industry/HealthandCommunityServices/Pages/WorkingExternalLocations.aspx>

Policy Renewals – Worker or Contractor?

Is your workers compensation policy up for renewal? Not sure whether the people you engage are workers or contractors? WorkCover NSW can help so that you can be confident that you are putting in the correct wage declaration.

Contact the WorkCover Worker Status Service to discuss your situation, or apply for a private ruling, which involves a certificate outlining whether the person is a worker for premium calculation purposes. For more information call **13 10 50** or go to the following link:

http://www.workcover.nsw.gov.au/WorkersCompensation/PrivateRulings/Worker_or_Contractor/Pages/default.aspx

Have you got your Fundraising Toolkit yet?

A free resource manual for fundraisers, boards and committees of not-for-profit organisations based in New South Wales is now available. The Fundraising Toolkit NSW covers vital topics such as corporate governance, risk management, financial management and fundraising strategies. The toolkit is the result of a joint venture between the NSW Government and the Fundraising Institute Australia. Please go to the following link for further information.

<http://www.fia.org.au/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Home>



DADHC News

Contributed by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC)

DADHC's new Funding Agreement 2009

DADHC has issued new Funding Agreements to HMMS for the period of 2009-2012. If your HMMS has not received or signed a new Funding Agreement for the period for 2009-2012 please contact your local DADHC office.

DADHC's Service Provider Portal

Provided by Barbara O'Neil, DADHC

Launched in 2008, DADHC's Service Provider Portal has seen 84% of service providers using the new system to date. The web-based Portal gives service providers access to information and opens new channels of communication between providers and DADHC. It is also environmentally friendly, using less paper, less printing and fewer delivery kilometres meaning lower carbon emissions.

Now, service providers can use the Portal to update their contact details, receive messages from DADHC, send messages to DADHC and check their payment advice history and their Minimum Data Set reports.

Speedy Communication DADHC can broadcast a message to all service providers or target messages to specific regions or groups with information about tenders, program launches, funding opportunities, newsletters, forums and training courses.

Service providers receive an email alert once the Portal broadcast message has been sent.

DADHC can also use the Portal to send reminders, such as the Annual Compliance Return linked to the form on the DADHC website or tender notifications with a link to the tender application package.

Service provider feedback about the Portal has been good, with over 90% of users reporting a positive experience. Portal users are now requesting additional information and resources, such as the provider's Service Description Schedule, contracted outputs for each outlet, and variations to levels of access to information on the Portal. DADHC's Portal team are currently working on building and improving the Portal's resources and services.

Easy Access Access to the Portal is password protected and the service provider nominates their users of the system. If you have not already accessed the Portal, DADHC's Portal Help Desk will provide you with your user name and password. Service providers can log on at <http://portal.dadhc.nsw.gov.au>, or contact the Help Desk on 1300 136 067 or portal@dadhc.nsw.gov.au.

The user's guide to DADHC's Service Provider Portal is located at: www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/CE9C1408-09E7-4EF4-9F09-FC95FCE1E805/3611/Training_Guide_Service_Providers_v3.pdf

Workforce Development Project

The NSW HACC Workforce Project is a major initiative funded by DADHC which aims to map the current paid and unpaid HACC workforce; to identify recruitment, support and retention issues; and to develop options for positioning our sector's workforce to meet future challenges.

Surveys will be distributed to all HACC services regarding their experiences with its workforce. The NSW HMMS State Council strongly encourages HMMS to participate in the survey during September.

Please check the Service Provider Portal on the DADHC website over the next fortnight for further details and a link to the survey. Information will also be distributed via email.

For further information please contact Glen Sorensen Age Communications glen@agecomm.net.

DADHC's changes to Police Checks

DADHC will cease to provide Criminal Record Checks from 30 September 2009.

DADHC recommends HMMS wishing to conduct a Police Check to do one of the following:

- Go to your local police station - cost: \$52.00 each
- Utilise NSW Business Link - cost: \$37.00 per employee or \$15.00 per volunteer
- Alternatively: some HMMS are using the following service for Police Checks at a cost of \$55.00 per police check: The Personnel Risk Management Group, PO Box 611 Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039
ph: 03 9370 8294, fax: 03 9370 5261 web www.prm.net.au

News from Aged Care Services

Fair Work Bill 2008 introduced into Federal Parliament

Source ACS - Industrial News Update Issue 190 4 December 2008

On Tuesday 25th November 2008 the Federal Government introduced the Fair Work Bill 2008 into Parliament. The new legislation will be introduced in two rounds, first round on 1st July 2009 and the second round on 1st January 2010. Changes that will come into effect on 1st July 2009 are:

- A new set of Unfair Dismissal laws and regulations significantly differing from the legislation currently in place. These will cover all employees, and a Small Business Fair Dismissal Code will be introduced to assist employers with less than 15 employees to manage the termination process with a qualifying period of twelve months. However larger businesses will have a qualifying period of six months.
- 'Operational reasons' will no longer be a defence to a claim of unfair dismissal, but cases of genuine redundancies will be allowed.
- The legislation will attempt to simplify the regulation of the federal industrial relations system by creating a one-stop shop called Fair Work Australia (FWA) to provide assistance and information.
- Fair Work Divisions will be created in the Federal Court and the Federal Magistrate's Court to hear matters which arise under the new workplace relations laws.
- A new agreement making a framework centred on collective bargaining and the principle of good faith bargaining will come into force.

Six months after the implementation of these changes, the second round of changes will commence on 1st January 2010. These changes are:

- A new safety net made up of the National Employment Standard (NES) and new modern awards that will apply to all employees in the federal system.
- New rules will come into effect relating to a union's right of entry to a workplace, which are more relaxed than the current rules.
- There will be some easing of the rules relating to the taking of industrial action with the vote of a majority of half the workforce (i.e. 26%) enough to commence action.
- New rules governing freedom of association, which refer to the right to be or not to be a member of an industrial association will come into force.

NSW Fire Brigades Talk Fire Safety in the Home

Provided by Barbara Neil, DADHC

A person walking their dog in Emu Plains one evening heard the sound of a smoke alarm inside a neighbour's villa. He called triple Zero (000). Firefighting crews arrive, conduct a search of the premises and find a 76 year-old resident unconscious in her bedroom. Relatives had only checked the smoke alarm in the villa three days prior to the fire. They were extremely happy they did. (From **Smoke Alarms Save Lives** – the real stories on the NSW Fire Brigades (NSWFB) website*)

The increased fire risk to older residents has been highlighted by the recent number of fire-related fatalities and injuries in NSW. *"Last year's winter fire fatality statistics show that seniors need to take more care around the home,"* said Firefighter Melanie Rebane, NSWFB's Community Safety Co-ordinator. *"Eight people in NSW aged 54 and over lost their lives from the effects of fire. That's 80 % of all the fire fatalities that occurred".*

NSWFB statistics show that the 65+ age group represents over 31% of all fire death victims and that the risk of fire fatality to people 65+ is nearly three times greater than that of the general community. The major causes of fire in the homes of elderly people include unattended cooking, smoking and falling asleep, electrical fires, misuse of heaters and electric blankets and overloaded powerboards.

"As frail, elderly people increasingly opt for care in their homes and their communities there is a need to establish effective fire strategies with the community care sector," Firefighter Rebane said. *"Home and Community Care (HACC) service providers who are providing services in clients' homes, or visiting clients in their homes, are in a position to check on their fire strategies and help keep their clients safe from fire."*

Firefighter Rebane said smoke alarms can be crucial life-saving devices that detect smoke and provide the critical seconds and minutes to escape a fire safely. By law, all NSW residents must have at least one working smoke alarm installed on each level of their home. Batteries for smoke alarms need to be checked regularly and replaced annually. The NSWFB has a community program known as the Smoke Alarm and Battery Replacement for the Elderly (**SABRE**), aimed at increasing safety awareness, education and confidence in fire and other safety issues across NSW.

The SABRE program is designed to support the elderly who live in their own homes, and who have limited domestic support, to live independently and safely in their homes. NSWFB forms partnerships with other community organisations to assist senior citizens in the maintenance of their fire safety devices, primarily battery operated smoke alarms. SABRE also means that local NSWFB firefighters can provide safety advice whilst visiting SABRE clients' premises and get a better understanding of their elderly clients' needs. The actual cost of the smoke alarms or batteries for the SABRE program is either the responsibility of SABRE clients or can be covered by partnership sponsorship. By working together, HACC service providers, carers and NSW firefighters can ensure that all older people know how to prevent fires and what to do if there is a fire in their home, and most importantly, have a smoke alarm that is working.

* Further information is available on the NSWFB website at: www.fire.nsw.gov.au or by contacting the NSWFB Community Safety Division on (02) 9742 7400.



Above: NSW Fire Brigade firefighters from Wollongong ensure this local resident is protected from fire through the NSWFB's SABRE program

Web Based Resources



Universal Design: Why don't we have more of it?

Jane Bringolf, PhD Candidate, Urban Research Centre,
University of Western Sydney, Parramatta

There could be several reasons why universal design has not taken off in a big way in the housing and construction industry – not knowing how to do it, industry wedded to longstanding technical efficiencies, entrenched 'us and them' attitudes towards people with disabilities and older people, unchallenged myths about cost and difficulty – to name a few. With greater prominence now given to the human rights of people with disabilities plus a rapidly ageing population, designing inclusively is becoming more than just a design option – it is becoming essential. So it would be good to find out just what the industry believes the inhibitors and facilitators of universal design really are.

Jane Bringolf is seeking to answer this question in her PhD studies at the Urban Research Centre, University of Western Sydney. Through in-depth interviews and surveying across the built environment industry Jane hopes to find out where the main difficulties lay and also what might be done to encourage more universally designed homes so that it becomes standard and 'normal'. As part of this study Jane is also seeking opinions of those who are experienced with both the issues of disability and construction.

All staff and contractors are invited to take part in the survey which can be [downloaded here](#). The information sheet can be [downloaded here](#). Depending on how many comments you want to make it should take about 10-15 minutes to complete the survey form. Any questions to Jane by email: j.bringolf@uws.edu.au or mobile 0417 231 349. More information about this study from Urban Research Centre website www.webaddress. An update on the findings will be presented in a future newsletter. This research has University of Western Sydney ethics approval (No. H6886).



University New South Wales
Faculty of the Built Environment
The Home Modification Information
Clearinghouse

**The Home Modification
Information Clearinghouse Project**
www.homemods.info

Clearinghouse News

In August 2008 The NSW Home Modification Information Clearinghouse relocated to the Faculty of the Built Environment at UNSW, and became part of the Centre for Health Assets Australasia (CHAA). As a result, the two groups have decided to combine their respective newsletters and the first issue is available at www.homemods.info.

Please note the following resources are available at www.homemods.info:

Modify or Move: Summary Bulletin

Ceiling Hoists - Industry Fact Sheet

Colour and the Ageing Eye. Consumer Fact Sheet

The Effectiveness of Ceiling Hoists in Transferring People with Disabilities. Consumer Fact Sheet

'Prosthetic' housing is a must with ageing population

Web Based Resources

The Australian Network for Universal Housing Design

The ANUHD's vision is for all new and largely renovated homes to be built to accommodate universal and lifecycle sensitive design features. The ANUHD believe that a universal design approach to housing will ensure that that homes we build are capable of accommodate our changing needs across the lifespan. For further information please go to the following link <http://www.anuhd.org/>

The Independent Living Centre

Are you stuck for looking for new and innovative products which may suit your client's needs? The Independent Living Center NSW has a wide variety of products available on their website. Please go to the following link to view their database:

<http://www.ilcnsw.asn.au/>

The National Resource Center on Supportive Housing and Home Modification

A university-based, non-profit organization dedicated to promoting aging in place and independent living for persons of all ages and abilities based at the University of Southern California, Los Angeles. The site is the American equivalent to the Australian based, Home Modification Information Clearing House. For information and resources please go to the following link:

Our Community

Our Community has launched their new website. Our Community is a world-leading social enterprise that provides advice, tools and training for Australia's 700,000 community groups and schools, and practical linkages between the community sector and the general public, business and government. To find more information please go to the following link:

<http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/>

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The NSW HMMS State Council meets quarterly to discuss issues that affect HMMS.
The next State Council meeting is being held on the 1ST AND 2ND OF DEC 2009. If you would like to place an item on the agenda for State Council to address, please contact your State Council Member in your region. Please refer to the contact details below.

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