



## Consumer Factsheet:

### Applying for Home Modifications

#### Would home modifications be useful to me?

Many homes are not designed with age or disability in mind. Do you find it difficult to;

1. Climb the stairs to your front door?
2. Lower and raise yourself on and off the toilet?
3. Stand at the kitchen bench to cook?

You are not alone!!! Thankfully, these difficulties can be minimized with the use of some fairly simple home modifications – alterations to the home that can improve accessibility and functionality. Your home can be altered to fit your individual needs.

#### What is the process involved if I want to modify my home?

Having your home modified usually involves a number of steps. These may include;

1. A home assessment by an occupational therapist (OT) or aged care assessment team, to determine which fittings may help you at home. Group homes will require assessments for individuals.
2. Contacting the home modification and maintenance service in your area and arranging for them to come to your home.

#### Who do I contact?

You don't need a doctor's referral in order to see an OT. You can make an appointment with an OT or Aged Care Assessment Team (ACAT) to





arrange a home assessment directly. ACAT's consist of a number of qualified health professionals, and may include nurses, doctors, social workers, physiotherapists or OT's. ACAT's may be the most appropriate point of contact for people with complex needs.

## Things to consider

1. Let your OT or ACAT know if you do not speak good English. You may require an interpreter, which they can help you to arrange.
2. If you don't speak very good English or are arranging an appointment for a non-English speaker, let your occupational therapist or ACAT know. They can organise an interpreter to make the consultation process easier.
3. Speak to your occupational therapist about assistive technology that may be helpful. Sometimes it may not be necessary to perform modifications to the house - there may be other tools available that are more effective and useful around the home.
4. 'The Home and Community Care Program subsidises costs for home modifications. Where possible, materials required for home modifications are at a discounted rate. The home modifications service is required to have a fee policy, with the flexibility to reduce or waive fees according to a client's financial situation. The fees will be discussed with the client and carer prior to the delivery of services. A client will never be refused access to services due to an inability to pay. Full cost recovery work is completed for clients who fall under other programs, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs.' (July 2006, Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care NSW, Home Modifications Fact Sheet).
5. Private and volunteer home modifications programs also exist. Discuss your options with your OT or ACAT team.

## Checklist

- Find an occupational therapist or Aged Care Assessment Team in your local area to arrange a home assessment. Make sure to discuss any additional needs, such as an interpreter.





Translating and Interpreting Service 131 450

Occupational therapists;  
<http://www.otnsw.com.au/ot/ppdir.php>

NSW	(02) 9648 3225
ACT	(02) 6207 9977
NT	(08) 8945 0044
QLD	(07) 3397 6744
SA	(08) 8239 1422
VIC	(03) 9481 6866
WA	(08) 9388 1490
TAS	(03) 6267 2540

Aged Care Assessment Teams;  
[http://www9.health.gov.au/ccsd/usr\\_general/gen\\_home.cfm](http://www9.health.gov.au/ccsd/usr_general/gen_home.cfm)

Commonwealth Carelink Centre	1800 052 222
TTY	1800 555 677
Speech-to-Speech	1800 555 727
Aged Care Information line	1800 500 853

- Once you have had a home assessment carried out, the Home Modification and Maintenance Service Provider in your local area can then be contacted in order to arrange modifications. There is a list of DADHC funded HACC home modifications services at;

<http://test.homemods.info/services/hmm>

Private home modifications services also exist, however costs may differ. These services are not subject to the same legislation as the HACC services. Search for private services at;

[www.serviceseeker.com.au](http://www.serviceseeker.com.au)  
[www.commcarelink.health.gov.au](http://www.commcarelink.health.gov.au)

- To have a look at some of the tools or assistive technology that can help you at home, or to speak to a qualified occupational therapist, visit, or contact, your local Independent Living Centre.

[www.ilcaustralia.org](http://www.ilcaustralia.org) 1300 885 886

- For any other health inquiries, or to look up other services and information, please look at [www.commcarelink.health.gov.au](http://www.commcarelink.health.gov.au)



