



**The University of Sydney**

Faculties of Health Sciences and Architecture

**Home Modification & Maintenance:  
Information Clearing House Project**

**Advisory Committee Minutes**

**Meeting of the HMM Information Clearinghouse Advisory  
Group**

**Thursday, 20<sup>th</sup> of February, 2003**

**At 3.00 p.m.**

**Deans Meeting Room, Darlington Campus,  
The Faculty of Architecture,  
the University of Sydney**

**Present**

Ms Jane Bringolf (Independent Living Centre of NSW)  
Ms Suzanne Pierce (Manager Policy Innovation, Dept of Ageing Disability & Home Care)  
Mr Neil Tucker (Council On The Ageing)  
Mr Alan Meldrum (NSW Statewide Home Modification Service)  
Ms Rebecca Rogers (Commonwealth Department of Veterans Affairs NSW State Office)  
Dr Robert Champion (Health & Community Care Branch, Health Department of NSW)  
Mr Dinesh (NCOSS N.S.W Council of Social Service)  
Ms Catherine Bridge (School of OLS, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney)

**Apologies**

Mr Ian Maxwell (Orange HMMS), Mark Nutting (Housing Policy NSW), Anne Reeve (Illawarra HMMS), and Noel Baum (Local Government NSW)

**Chair**

Assoc Prof Peter Phibbs (Faculty of Architecture, University of Sydney)

**Note taker**

Ms Julie Cameron (School of OLS, Faculty Of Health Sciences, University of Sydney)

**Notes**

**Actions**

**1 Welcome, introduction & apologies**

The meeting was opened at 3:05pm. Peter welcomed everyone and invited each person to introduce themselves. Apologies were acknowledged.

## Notes

## Actions

### 2 Minutes from the last meeting

Previous minutes were accepted as a true and accurate record with the following amendments: corrections to the spelling of Suzanne Pierce and Rebecca Rogers

### 3 Sign off on HMM Service Provider Needs Assessment Report

Discussions related to the role of the Committee regarding 'sign off' of this type of documentation. In general, the role of the Committee was seen as providing feedback, advice and guidance to the project as the Committee members were not qualified to comment on research methodology and analysis.

Needs Analysis Report to be edited for publication – **Katy, Peter, Julie**

The following observations were also noted:

- *Suzanne observed it was not appropriate for the committee on research in the sense of seeking to influence the content. The appropriate role is to discuss and work through how the findings/outcomes of any research can be managed or progressed.*
- Jane stated the research was 'owned' by the project team not the Advisory Committee
- Bob stated he was not qualified to comment on the content of the Needs Analysis. He saw his role as passing on information as required within the health system.

Peter suggested a process similar to that used by AHURI: document is circulated to the committee who has 21 days to respond.

Katy explained that an element of trustworthy qualitative research includes review by an advisory committee. This process must be commented on in the final draft of document.

Draft Terms of Reference for Project Advisory Committee **Julie, Katy, Peter**

Katy commented that this discussion highlighted the issue of policy and procedure in general. She suggested we adopt the AHURI method as explained by Peter. Peter added that the committee has right of reply not a right to veto.

## Notes

## Actions

### 4 Clearinghouse website development - usability testing

Peter thanked the committee members who had participated in the usability test. The next scheduled usability test is 28 February with the industry sector. Results of this usability test will determine the need for further testing. The aim is for the website to 'go live' prior to the official launch to allow for further informal use and feedback of the site.

Peter invited comments on this process. Jane stated that the launch was eagerly anticipated but cautioned not to be distracted or waste resources by striving for perfection. Katy agreed but commented that a reasonable quality was required or users will not revisit the website. Suzanne acknowledged the extent of work by the team.

Katy distributed a draft of rules for participation for the listserve. When questioned, Peter explained that a listserve is similar to a bulletin board but includes a searchable database. For the project team this is valuable as it can provide direction for future evidence based practice reviews.

Jane asked if this facility was a duplication of the Queensland Home Modification listserve moderated by Desley DeJong. Katy explained that the two services were complementary as only occupational therapists could subscribe to the Qld listserve.

Katy explained that the process for subscription includes a 'pop up' box that requires the subscriber to click on 'I agree' for completion of subscription. *Suzanne suggested that this information also indicate that the inclusion or exclusion of postings is at the moderator's discretion.*

Modify listserve rules for participation **Katy, Julie**

Katy asked for general comments / feedback. Peter reminded the committee that the website would be live prior to the launch including the listserve. This should unearth any flaws in the process.

## Notes

Jane commented that many people click 'I agree' without reading the conditions particularly if they are overwhelmed with information e.g. putting mail on hold – this information could be provided elsewhere.

Discussion concluded that process could be modified as required. The types of responses received when live will test if process is reliable.

Alan asked if general broad topic could be included to help search through archived and current comments. Katy suggested it maybe possible to link topics to our current indexing system

Rebecca commented on the importance of appropriate labels or subject to enable subscribers to enable more efficient identification of the email. Katy suggested the listserve be called HMMinfo-L

Katy added that common topics on the listserve could direct future evidence based practice reviews.

Issues relating to conflict of interest were discussed. Guidelines state that recommendation of commercial products are acceptable unless the subscriber receives a direct financial benefit.

## 5 Evidenced based practice reviews

First 'package' is now complete. The package includes an industry fact sheet, consumer fact sheet, systematic review and letter to appropriate bodies regarding research. Katy distributed a sample package to committee members.

Feedback on content and presentation of package was sought. Katy explained that Specialist Panels would review documents prior to posting on website to ensure validity and accuracy.

Alan asked how topics were selected, i.e. why reeded decking was reviewed. He added it was a common dilemma for HMM service providers. Katy stated that the question had been posed on a number of occasions by the industry.

## Actions

Investigate possibility of existing indexing system **Peter, Katy**

Develop protocol for selecting / prioritising future evidence based practice reviews

## Notes

Alan added that alternative solutions should also be included – the current list was too limited. Many homeowners reject timber as an option due to the high levels of maintenance. He continued, other materials offer more a slip resistant surface and clients more readily agree to recoat with this product 3 yearly.

The need for validated research to support recommendations was explained e.g. there is little research on slip resistance of ground surfaces. Alan's example is anecdotal and therefore could not be included as evidenced based. However, the listserve could be a valuable tool for debating and sharing this type of information.

Katy reiterated, 'hot topics' on the listserve can direct future evidence based reviews.

The consensus is that the presentation is good and recognizable. Suzanne suggested the target group be highlighted in text – subtle images in the margins were not sufficient. Jane added that text should be plain English in simple sentences to maximise the readability.

Katy commented that the draft documents had not yet been reviewed by Specialist Panels.

## 6 Specialist Panel Formation

Draft terms of reference were circulated for comment. Peter explained that three panels were to be formed – construction industry/occupational therapy, consumer and research/academic. Each panel member would receive a complete package as distributed to the advisory committee but would only comment on their relevant area.

## Actions

Liaise with graphic designer to modify templates **Katy**

## Notes

Peter asked the committee for suggestions for potential panel members. Suggestions included

- NSW OT Association Home Modification group
- Annie McCluskey due to strong evidence based practice experience. Katy commented that the 'Cochrane protocol' typically used by occupational therapists because of its medical bias was not the best model for the Clearing House. For instance, recent housing research has opted for the 'Campbell protocol' designed for the social sciences in preference.
- Lindy Clemson
- Lynette McKenzie
- People with Disabilities – Building Access Committee

Advantages of inviting people outside NSW were discussed. Appropriate number of members on each panel was considered. Peter suggested 5 members were required for a quorum therefore 6 -8 members required for each panel.

Suzanne stated the terms of reference should be more specific regarding the members' required skills. Clearly articulated skill requirements may highlight potential panel members.

Katy discussed the methodological advantages of panel members being a representative sample (equivalent to a stratified sample). Suzanne suggested team consider whether there was a need for panel members to be experienced in research, evidence based practice etc

Rebecca highlighted the advantages of inviting organizations rather than individuals and allowing the organization to appoint a representative.

Suzanne stated the guidelines / terms of reference should clearly state what is expected of panel members.

## Actions

Draft minimum skills requirement for each specialist panel **Julie, Katy**

Prepare list of potential panel members **Katy, Peter, Julie**

Redraft terms of reference **Julie, Katy, Peter**

## Notes

## Actions

### 8 Any other business

Suzanne informed the committee that Katy and Peter had provided DADHC with a schedule of deliverables relating to the current project. The committee will be provided with a copy and feedback sought at a later meeting.

Alan commented, in relation to previous meeting minutes, that there was a lack of available occupational therapists particularly in non-metropolitan areas. A submission for \$50k, to assist HMM services that do not have access to an OT, has been made.

Jane tabled a copy of the flyer to be distributed at the Premiere's Conference promoting the Independent Living Centre.

Katy stated she had attended the adaptable housing standards meeting. Australian Building Codes Board National Forum is to be held in Sydney. Attendance is by invitation only. Katy will provide a list of stakeholders to broaden the participants beyond the housing industry only as ABCB had originally planned.

### 8 Next Working Group Meeting date

3.00 pm the 29 of  
May 2003 at the  
Faculty of Health  
Sciences East  
Street Lidcombe.

Meeting closed at 4:45p.m.