



Advisory Committee Minutes

www.homemods.info

Meeting of the HM Information Clearinghouse Advisory Committee

16 Dec 2010

At 2.00 p.m.

Level 1 Meeting Room

Room 1010, West Wing,

The Faculty of the Built Environment

University of NSW

Present

Margaret Kay (LGSA)
Nicholas Loder (DHS/DOH)
Annette Hanly (SCOPE Access)
Sue Dinley (DVA)
A/P Catherine Bridge (HMINFO)
Rachel Walls (HMINFO)

Apologies

Ros Barlow SCOPE Access
David Gonzalez & Lesley Radbron, LifetimeCare
Mark Flynn, ADHC
Ruth Robinson, PDCN
Robyn Chapman, Independent Living
Stacy Sheppard-Smith, HMMS
Ian Maxwell Wesley Mission
Sandra Lightfoot-Collins

Chair

A/P Catherine Bridge

Note taker

Rachel Walls

Notes

1. Welcome, introduction & apologies

CB opened the meeting at 2.00 p.m. Apologies were noted.

Minutes were accepted as is, no amendments required.

2. General discussion

CB apologies for rescheduling meeting, there were some important consultancy and policy advisory meetings required a reshuffle e.g. COAG Community Care Standards/NDA meeting.

The 'Stronger Together' package was tabled for discussion – it contains more about mainstreaming and dealing with inclusive design, maintenance and infrastructure etc. so has implications for a range of service providers especially home-modifications.

Two key strategies: 1) person-centred care – 90k p/person package. Not certain yet how it will be assessed and implemented. First to be assessed and addressed will be younger people in residential care. 2) Early intervention – only based on five impairments easily diagnosed from birth (i.e. downs syndrome, fragile x, etc). Of this, 5 million is marked for research. However this is a very small amount, and it will be difficult to construct thoughtful and well-designed research programs that can be generalised across the disability sector.

3. Clearinghouse update

Webstats: There is a downward trend in visits, however there are now two different types of web statistics being used, and Google Analytics paints a different picture of visitors to www.webstat.com/ (the program that we have subscribed to since 2003). The Google data does not appear to indicate the same trend so we need to investigate further to understand why a variance exists. Both programs seem to both count visitors in different ways and this is a complication. A possible reason is a decrease in publications this year reducing traffic to the website. There is a chance that also the change from A3 to the UNSW server could play a role. Also, with the move from CHAA to CityFutures, HMinfo no longer issues a newsletter, as it no longer a deliverable. Also the website user posting notification system is unstable so this could be a contributing factor as well.

Despite all the above, there are still a large number of visitors and the return visitors trend is consistent.

By country, Australia has the lion's share. US OTs have endorsed HMinfo as a good source of evidence-based practice information.

NL – are there other sites like this (HMINFO)?

CB – no, IDEA is similar but only HMinfo does home mods

specifically.

NSW is most active because of HMMS program but all states are using the site.

SD – DVA Perth state advisor – they say what they need and just give it to an architect. Then it goes to a builder. What they do in WA, the design without the OT doing drawings. They have architects on staff.

CB – the drawing issue is a problematic one but in construction, drawings are the means of works specification and no drawing means no legal means to specify or measure outcomes or intent.

NL – what is a bounce rate?

CB – it's a measure of how often a web site visitor only views a single page on a website, that is, the visitor leaves a site without visiting any other pages before a specified session-timeout occurs. While bounce rate is a useful tool some websites, it is of more questionable value for information websites, where many visitors go to scan headlines and conduct research, and can find what they want immediately on the entry page. For this reason in websites like ours, metrics such as returning visitors vs. new visitors are more informative and should be used to understand the overall picture better.

On the same tack, it also important to be aware that Google's search algorithms are changing and they have recently changed how contextual advertising works, changed map searches and taken their new AdWords search <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AdWords> out of Beta testing. A contextual advertising system scans the text of a website for [keywords](#) and returns advertisements to the webpage based on what the user is viewing.

SD – you mean ads that pop up?

RW – you can pay for rankings

CB – you can alter search results that way, we need to keep an eye on this.

One of the things we want to put forward to ADHC as the usability needs to be revisited.

NL – Councils run libraries, don't they Margaret?

MK – yes

NL – Older people usually go there to get their information.

CB – We are planning to improve the website next year, as FBE is launching their new website. The Dean, identified there were some problems with usability and marrying up to the UNSW style, so I talked to Alec (Tzannes – Dean, FBE) and have an agreement for some funding to look at usability of the Faculty site and am hoping that I can combine this with some testing of HMinfo.

What is interesting is that it's the consumer factsheets that are

moving up the rankings, so our viewer stats appear to be largely consumer driven.

MK – If you want the libraries to help with testing I can arrange it

CB – yes, thanks

We also have a librarian on rotation from UNSW Library, via a secondment on a six month rotation system.

Publications

Waged Care is in peer review (paper tabled in draft format). These are real cases, worked up in collaboration with HMM services. Research has previously been concerned with formal care/informal care/independence – however examination of self-care with the help of assistive technologies and a supportive environment is a new area of research. The report looks at the cost aspects, and different ways to think about that.

NL – you've got some great stuff here.

CB – The data collection framework we developed gives you data in a simple format, so it can be used as an assessment form. Phillippa is an industrial designer and she did a great job.

NL – Is there a link to the liveable housing guidelines on the website?

CB – Not at the moment except as news flashes, if you search you will find it. Unfortunately we can't put up documents by others without their permission because the publisher wants to track interest, so it is more common to list web links. In Home Modification Information Clearinghouse we do this in three ways. 1. As a news item; 2. As a web link and 3. As a library item.

RW - to check w/Amelia Starr if the FASCIA doc is online re liveable housing.

CB – In terms of the Liveable housing discussions, The prestigious 2010 Human Rights Medal was awarded to Thérèse Rein for her longstanding work along side people with a disability. Another project we advised on the Accessible Arts project was nominated for the Community (Organisation) Award.

I would also like to report on another issue that occurred with planning NSW concerning their new State Environmental Planning Policy No 60--*Exempt And Complying Development*, which has impacted Home Modification applications. In effect OTs being asked to put in Development Applications for any ramps that do not comply with AS1428.1 are in bushfire or conservation areas etc.

MK – part of construction/bushfire paper

CB – if it's in a heritage area it must be at the back of the house. It is direct discrimination, particularly given the risk-impact statement around staircases produced for the ABCB stated that cost of making even one handrail mandatory for stairs in private homes was cost prohibitive but anyone needed a ramp must have two as set out in AS1428.1 regardless of whether they are

needed for function or safety.

SD – question – DVA's mandate in shared accommodation – is to provide no access as we may get embroiled in legal battles. So no lifts, ramps, stairclimbers. Are we discriminating?

CB – Probably not as under Strata title law this is the responsibility of the Body Corporate and the new Access to Premises legislation will make access mandatory.

NL – it's a class 2

CB – In Sydney city we are on the tipping point of moving from most homes being Torrens title to the majority being Strata title. Current stats indicate that 48% of Sydney residents are now in strata title.

NL – all common areas need to be accessible. This will likely be retrospective.

SD – what about a person in a bad spot in strata?

CB – they can file discrimination, but once the new laws click in, it is a strata issue of mods for compliance.

SD – it's like electric (modifications), nobody wants to touch it.

CB – Bruce Judd has just been awarded a new AHURI project looking at older people and downsizing. A common view is that older people should be moving out of large 2-3 bedroom housing to smaller lower maintenance accommodation. But lack of control of Strata levies and issues with body corporate makes this option problematic for low-income older people as modifications, levies and body corporate politics can be problematic.

SD – should these people be provided with lifts so they can age in place?

CB – We know from the current research that: death of a partner; late life divorce; Debt going into retirement (mortgage), and the onset of Disability can trigger downsizing.

SD – so these lead to Downsizing – the big D!

CB – the Aboriginal Housing report is currently being finished up by Rachel Walls

SD – have you spoken with the MJD people at Groote Eylandt?

CB – they were going to supply case studies but had staff changes and so couldn't in the end. But we will ensure that as many aboriginal groups as possible are involved in the final review.

NL – did you talk to anyone in housing?

MK – I can put you in touch with Aboriginal Land Council staff.

SD – also special needs for ramps in cyclone areas

CB – yes in tropical areas there are also issues with flooding, and wildlife, so achieving level access can be problematic and as a result most houses are off ground with ramps. Cost-benefit of

ramps is on the website – thanks to Sue for info sharing.

Bridging and Berming – Working through housing types systematically. Looks at costing, etc.

NL – is she (Phillippa C.) ok with the bushfire code?

CB – not sure, she may need to talk to you, but it's an earth moving solution. Hopefully we will have it in draft for the next meeting.

Events & Training

CB – FICCDAT 2011 will bring together six important and different conferences all focused on enhancing the lives of seniors, persons with disabilities and their family caregivers. Between June 5-8, 2011 rehabilitation, social and health services providers, government policy makers, researchers, family caregivers, students, seniors and persons with disabilities from around the world will gather in Toronto, Canada to explore issues facing aging populations, the implications for healthcare systems and service providers, the roles and responsibilities of family caregivers and policy and how new research findings and technologies are leading new and practical solutions. Although it is more than a year away, you can be sure that IFA will be involved! Ed Steinfeld is an organiser.

An RERC grant was awarded to Ed Steinfeld at the [IDeA Center](#), late last year to build on their earlier universal Design grant awarded in 2006 – we are a international partner in the grant. As we know better what our role is we will report more in 2011.

Enabling Environments Template – bath trolleys, ambulance trolleys, strata title – it's a big problem.

A90 – took A80 and stretched it so no new research, so we don't know explicitly what if it includes or excludes.

NL – does the 80 include hands?

CB – yes

NL – no knuckles?

CB – the only Australian published research work was carried out by Bails in 1983 and he established an average open-door width of 730 mm for an A80 wheelchair user with knuckle touching on passing through.

NL – people design on structural dimensions but forget plasterboard, skirtings, doorframes, etc.

CB – people forget about handrails too – with similar problems on ramps.

What we are trying to do is to develop a block CAD library covering critical assistive technologies in a range of sizes so that designers can appropriately accommodate a range of mobility

impaired users.

SD – 1530 needs to depart (leaves meeting)

Annual Report draft tabled.

Other Clearinghouse Projects

CB – AHURI report on low-moderate income age-specific housing is in write-up but we are still missing the economic analysis from Paul Flatau at Murdoch. Will be with AHURI in Jan, then to peer review. Then it will be published around April. AHURI older people's housing Essay has been finalised. Caroma-Dorf approached HMIInfo – we will do an Industrial Design studio and lit review on kitchens and bathrooms in relation to liveability. They want to make an inclusive design range.

NL – 1428 – Caroma Care suite – will this mention the liveable housing guidelines?

CB – well it will be a new standard in the end. But until we do the work, we don't know.

NL – that'll be for public building

CB – well yes but we want to develop a retro-fit standard. So what we may do is frame up something.

NL – so it will be a subject over a semester?

CB – yes and CaromaDorf will provide a prize possibly.

Culturally it is quite ok to sit on the loo and wash your hands in some places, but it's not done here.

Hamamatsu, magnetic shiftable grab rail – so there are new ideas too

Meeting closed at 15.50

Next Advisory Committee Meeting

The venue for the next meeting is will be held on Thursday the 3rd March 2011 at the Faculty of The Built Environment, University of NSW. The meeting room will be confirmed closer to the date.