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# Newsletter

Edition 56 | 3rd July 2020

## Editor's Note

Welcome to the instalment of the HMinfo Newsletter for 2020.

While COVID-19 is beginning its second outbreak in many parts of the world, the HMinfo team continue working from home and studying the diagnostic systems and home features that enable independence, safety and comfort in the home while reducing physical contact with carers and health and building professionals. People with disability and older people tend to be more vulnerable in contracting viruses like COVID-19, while, at the same time, have greater homecare needs. In the coming months, the HMinfo Clearinghouse will provide publications with evidence-based information on telehealth, self-assessment of functional ability and Assistive Technology that increases independence.

Since our last newsletter, we published a useful Consumer Factsheet about Home Lighting. The factsheet describes the main lighting technologies and answers basic questions that will assist consumers make informed choices that will improve the lighting quality in their home and will decrease energy use for electric lighting. You can read our lighting Factsheet [here](#). The [Consumer Factsheet: Arranging Home Modifications, Ed. 2](#), should always be the guide for older people and people with disability to seek funding and assistance to arrange home modifications.

For the OTs that faithfully follow the HMinfo Clearinghouse publications, do not forget to have a look at our [COVID-19 factsheet](#), which is frequently updated to reflect government and international instructions and guidelines. addressed to the industry during home visits in a new Industry Factsheet, which will be updated once new guidelines are introduced.

We are always happy to receive your feedback about our publications and your suggestions for future projects. Until our next newsletter, keep safe!

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## NEW HMinfo RESOURCES

### Consumer Factsheet: Home Lighting

This factsheet aims to inform older people, people with disability and their carers about the properties of the most common household lights and assist them choose the right light bulb for their needs. Lighting is an important parameter in home design, enabling safety and comfort for the performance of everyday tasks, such as walking, reading, cooking, etc.

[Download this resource from the HMinfo website](#)



### Industry Factsheet: COVID-19

This factsheet aims to give information on how health professionals and service providers working with older people and people with disability can protect themselves and their clients during the COVID-19 outbreak. The publication is updated frequently during this health emergency.

[Download this resource from the HMinfo website](#)



### Consumer Factsheet: Arranging Home Modifications, Ed. 2

Home modifications increase people's wellbeing and reduce the need for care at home. This publication helps people arrange modifications that will enable them to be safer and more comfortable in their home. The steps to decide which home modifications are the best for your home as well as ways to apply for funding are included.

[Download this resource from the HMinfo website](#)



## Designing home environments for people who experience problems with cognition and who display aggressive or self-injurious behaviour. Ed. 2

Three HMinfo publications (Evidence Based Practice Review, Industry Factsheet and Consumer Factsheet), addressed to different audiences, provide information to assist people with cognitive impairments and their carers to arrange modifications that will enable them to be safer and more comfortable in their home. Strategies to reduce potential triggers and minimise the risk of property damage and of harm for people are provided.

[Download this resource from the HMinfo website](#)



## Consumer Factsheet: Bidet douche seats, flexible hoses and bidets

This report informs consumers about the function of bidet douche seats, flexible hoses and bidets and about the hazards associated to non-compliant installations of these fittings in their bathrooms.

[Download this resource from the HMinfo website](#)



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## Other RESOURCES

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### Ageing in the Right Place. An Australian perspective.

Global Centre for Modern Ageing (2020). Ageing in the Right Place. An Australian perspective.

This report describes the results of a survey to more than 1,000 Australians, aged 55+, with a goal to understand the characteristics of the 'right place' for living as we grow older, means and how this "right place" can be achieved. The results have been summarised into the House-Home-Haven framework, developed by the GCMA, which provides a perspective for transforming physical houses and spaces into meaningful havens.

[View this resource on your browser](#)

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## **Currency and Competence of Occupational Therapists and Consumers with Rapidly Changing Technology**

Steel, E.J., Buchanan, R., Layton, N., Wilson, E. (2017). Currency and Competence of Occupational Therapists and Consumers with Rapidly Changing Technology. Hindawi, Occupational Therapy International, Volume 2017, Wiley

This article proposes a more person-centered approach to the prescription of assistive technology to people with disability, as well as the incorporation of more mainstream products into the occupational therapists' scope of practice, in order to improve people's quality of life while reducing cost and funding. The authors suggest that a new model of efficient service provision would include expert assistive technology users' advice and participation

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## **Small but Significant. The impact and cost benefits of handyperson services.**

Adams, S. (2018). Small but Significant. The impact and cost benefits of handyperson services. Care & Repair England.

This publication analyses the significance of handyperson services in the health and care integration and prevention.

Handyperson services are particularly useful for vulnerable groups of the population, such as 'older old' (80yrs+) people and people with disability. As presented in this report, minor modifications, and repairs (e.g. grabrails, improved lighting, home hazard removal etc.) can improve the wellbeing and increase independence at home. Handyperson works can especially reduce the chances of falls in the home. Falls is one of the parameters that are hugely increasing due to housing factors that can be addressed with handyperson services. The cost benefits are also important both for the individuals as well as for the health systems.

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## **Housing and disabled people. A toolkit for local authorities in England: Adaptations.**

Equality and Human rights Commission & Habinteg (2018). Housing and disabled people. A toolkit for local authorities in England: Adaptations.

A toolkit aimed to assist leaders and practitioners in housing, adult social care, occupational therapists and tenant engagement teams with the provision and management of home modifications. The tool has questionnaires, case studies and advice about promoting and providing home adaptations (modifications), increasing

awareness on home modifications and funding opportunities. It mainly relates to UK but the checklists can be useful also for Australian providers.

[View this resource on your browser](#)

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## **Adaptations without delay. A guide to planning and delivering home adaptations differently**

Royal College of Occupational Therapists (Russell, R., Walker, M., Copeman, I., Porteus, J.), (2019). Adaptations without delay. A guide to planning and delivering home adaptations differently. Royal College of Occupational Therapists

This guide from the Royal College of Occupational Therapists in UK highlights the benefits home modifications have for the safety and risk reduction, comfort, and independence of people with disability and older people in their homes. The review conducted presents evidence that official assessments of the functional needs or abilities of people often delay the delivery of the modifications, which might lead to increase of disability or injuries. It is also reported that many people who are not eligible for home modification funding would benefit from information about the types of modifications and from guidance on their installation.

The report is mainly addressed to occupational therapists and home improvement agencies, housing associations and other housing providers.

[View this resource on your browser](#)

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## **EVENTS**

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### **Universal Design Conference 2020**

Centre for Universal Design Australia is delighted to bring you the 4th Australian Universal Design Conference. After the success of previous conferences we have set our sights across the wide world of universal design. This year the theme is, "Thriving with Universal Design: Everyone, Everywhere, Everyday". The theme provides opportunity for anyone working with or researching universal design and inclusive practice to contribute to this growing body of work. This conference comes with a promise to broaden delegates' thinking about the many ways universal design can be utilised and applied.

Mon 12 Oct 2020 - Tue 13 Oct 2020

Tue 13: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Mon 12: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Melbourne Showgrounds

[Link](#)

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## Virtual OT Exchange 2020

To accommodate changes to our professional environment caused by COVID 19, the OT Exchange Program will be moving to new dates, (Monday 14 -Tuesday 15 September 2020) and the conference will be delivered online.

The new dates have been planned to consider the immediate needs of families, businesses and local communities during this period of rapid change.

[Link](#)

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](mailto:hminfo@unsw.edu.au). To unsubscribe from future HMinfo newsletters, please click [unsubscribe](#).



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