



Home Modification Information Clearinghouse

Never Stand Still

Built Environment

Newsletter

Edition 51 | 28th May 2019



From the Editor

Welcome to the 1st instalment of the HMinfo Newsletter for 2019.

This newsletter comes a little later than expected, as the EBEP and HMinfo team have been busy on new research projects and publications, as well as making vast improvements to the HMinfo website.

As you may have already noticed, the appearance of the HMinfo website (<https://www.homemods.info/>) has been updated, with the aim to make access to the resources, easier. The headings and categories have been simplified and the resources can be found in less clicks, for quicker and easier access. After a number of improvements were made, we commissioned the Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN) and Vision Australia to assess the accessibility and usability of the website, for various disability types. We are now in the process of consolidating their feedback and improving the layout of our publications. You can share any feedback on the appearance and usability of our website by sending us an email (hminfo@fbe.unsw.edu.au).

Another new feature of our website is the Built Environment Industry Professionals Forum. HMinfo hosts a successful OT Forum since 2003 and want to ride on the same level of success by replicating a forum for built environment professionals. Creating an inclusive built environment, is challenging, and industry professionals will face substantial change in the next twenty years if it is to meet the increasing demands for an Aging Population, increasing demand from the NDIS whilst creating less stigmatising, affordable and sustainable design outcomes that build reputation and demonstrate best practices in this field.

Some of the topics of the new HMinfo forum could include:

- Legislation changes and/or impact;
- Funding changes and/or impact on managing/growing your business and getting paid eg. [MyAged Care](#) and [NDIS](#) funding;
- Royal Commissions ie. [Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety](#) and/or [Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability](#);
- Licences & permits, eg. [Australian Business Licence and Information Service \(ABLIS\)](#);
- Working with [Occupational Therapists](#) and [people with disabilities](#);
- Industry safety issues and environmental concerns, eg. managing dust, asbestos and the like see some [state-specific WHS requirements](#) relevant to the construction industry;
- Product issues and product innovations that create better cheaper outcomes
- Other Industry issues and "accessible product and design" exchanges.

Please join us and invite others by passing on this message to anyone who you think could contribute and/or benefit.

<https://www.homemods.info/forums/built-environment-industry-professionals>

In the following days we will publish the new HMinfo publication which is the 2nd edition of the Evidence Based Practice View: Designing home environments for people who experience problems with cognition and who display aggressive or self-injurious behaviour, which was first published in 2008. The aim of the new edition is to update the literature and add the new material published within the last 10 years and seek for more practical advice that might help people with cognitive impairments and their carers. A consumer factsheet on the same subject will follow as well as factsheets on water and sanitation issues for people with disability.

HMinfo Research

- Designing home environments for people who experience problems with cognition and who display aggressive or self-injurious behaviour
 - Plumbing systems: Bidet douche seats, flexible hoses and bidets
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Home Modification Resources

Book review - Accessible America, by Bess Williamson

Accessible America is a book on the history of accessible environments and enabling aids and features, from the mid-twentieth century until today, in the United States. Bess Williamson describes the route from defining a new category of design, the design that enabled people with disability to participate in everyday activities, to transforming assistive technology into fashion elements.

The needs of the people with disability started being an important public issue when the first World War II veterans returned to US, many of them with injuries and disabilities. The first accessible features were not designed by architects or designers but constructed by communities or added to already built environments to provide easier access to the members that had mobility difficulties. Features like ramps, parking spaces or rails were not treated as design elements and many designers were opposed to their inclusion in their projects, as they would cause inconvenience and additional cost to the "general public".

Towards the end of the twentieth century, the term Universal design was established and introduced the notion that design can remove barriers for all, and accessibility does not need to be provided by "special" elements or design. Lately disability is positioned as a source for innovation and personalised design, enabling users to express themselves while being comfortable and independent.

In this highly recommended book you will not only find the history of the accessible design but the parallel progress of the people with disability advocacy, political movements and activism, which contributed to shape today's accessible design.

Williamson, B. (2019). *Accessible America*. NYU Press. Available at:

<https://nyupress.org/9781479894093/accessible-america/>

Book review - Building Access. Universal design and the politics of disability, by Aimi Hamraie

Building Access examines the principles of Universal Design from a sociological perspective and explores the problematic of any designer when trying to implement these principles. People with disabilities often, if not most of the times, experience an unfriendly environment, a "world that is not designed with them in mind". An inclusive world needs designers that will create spaces for everyone, without exceptions, misinterpretations or prejudice. But who is everyone and how can designers know they have included everyone?

This book gives the history of Universal Design, from the conditions under which the concept matured to the present and future trajectories, given the current and anticipated trends in population change, politics and architecture. Universal Design is not described as a methodology to design accessible environments but is also described as a quiet activist movement, giving new meanings to disability in architecture, medicine, and society. Hamraie also highlights the importance of evidence-based design strategies and user feedback on new accessible environments and systems.

Hamraie, A. (2019). : *Building Access. Universal design and the politics of disability*. University of Minnesota Press. Available at: www.upress.umn.edu/book-division/books/building-access

Journal Article: Living environment, heating-cooling behaviours and well-being: Survey of older South Australians

The impacts of the quality of the built environment and of the weather conditions on the health of older Australians is investigated in this study by Soebarto et al. The physiological changes that occur in humans as they age can impact the thermal regulation mechanisms of their bodies. For people to establish thermal comfort in their residences they use mechanical heating and cooling. The poor quality of the Australian buildings -old buildings, most of them having no insulation, old and of poor-quality windows, no central heating/cooling systems, etc- along with the more intense weather phenomena that we are experiencing quite lately, make the use of electrical or gas appliances frequent. The increased use of electric heating and cooling systems has many disadvantages, the most important of which are the increased living costs for older people and other vulnerable citizens, the increased load for the power plants and the consequences for the environment.

The researchers interviewed 250 people over 65 about their housing conditions and their health-related behaviour during periods when mechanical heating/cooling is required. The respondents were found to be unaware of the impacts of the indoor environment on their health but were concerned about the electricity cost due to the use of heaters and air-conditions.

You can access the article and read all the findings on the following link:

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360132319301842#bib5>

Soebarto, V., Bennetts, H., Hansen, A., Zuo, J., Williamson, T., Pisaniello, D., van Hoof, J. & Visvanathan, R. (2019). Living environment, heating-cooling behaviours and well-being: Survey of older South Australians. *Building and Environment*, 157, 215-226.

Events

Summit

Aged Care Week

2nd Aged Care Tech Forum 2019 provides leading case studies exploring methods to embed technology as part of your organisational strategy. This summit brings together key technology and aged care experts to deliver case studies, insights and strategies to drive consumer-directed care, enable an 'intelligent environment' and capitalise on data and biometrics to enhance the quality of care for senior Australians. Pullman Melbourne on the Park, 192 Wellington Parade, Melbourne VIC 3002, Australia.

Dates:

Tue 18 Jun 2019 - Thu 20 Jun 2019

Tue 18: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Wed 19: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Thu 20: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

https://akolade.com.au/events/aged-care-week/?utm_source=EPXAAA&utm_medium=ACW19

Conference

3rd Annual Navigating the Complexities of Disability Housing conference

The 2019 Navigating the Complexities of Disability Housing conference will bring together thought leaders from across the nation to provide you with the key skills needed to overcome challenges with SDA, through sustainable knowledge & experience-based solutions.

Sydney Harbour Marriott

29th & 30th May 2019

<https://www.criterionconferences.com/event/disability-housing-conference/>

New EBEP Project

Calling on wheelchair users! Do you use a wheelchair in your daily life or for community access (i.e. in public environments but not necessarily at home)? Do you make use of public accessible bathrooms? Then we want to hear from you!

Researchers at UNSW Sydney (The University of New South Wales) and GWA Caroma are seeking volunteer research participants to learn about the space requirements of public accessible washbasins for wheelchair users. The aim is to collect the information required to improve the usability of bathroom designs for wheelchair users and inform future changes to the Australian Standards and construction codes.

For inclusion criteria and a short description of the lab session visit the following link:

<https://www.homemods.info/news-and-events/news/invitation-to-participate-in-research-on-washbasins-in-public-accessible-bathrooms>

If interested, please contact the researchers either by email (LivableBathrooms@unsw.edu.au) or phone (02 9285 0711) for more information.

HMinfo Team



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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. To unsubscribe from future HMinfo newsletters, please click [unsubscribe](#).

www.homemods.info



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