HMinfo Research

Principles and Procedures

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Related Research Approach

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project is working to ensure equitable opportunities and outcomes for all home modification and maintenance stakeholders regardless of their socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, or gender. Consequently, we believe the research methodologies that explicitly invite collaboration and partnership will produce the most effective means to explore the qualities, reasoning and outcomes of importance. Therefore, as part of our mission to expand relevant Home Modification information within NSW, the Home Modification Information Clearinghouse team are committed to the following activities.

Sector Reform

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project conducts research into issues associated with provision of home modification and maintenance services to improve practice and consumer oriented outcomes.

Community Engagement

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project is conducting research that looks at community engagement as a critical component of sector reform. Community engagement includes consumers, partners and carers, other service providers, and relevant professional and training organisations.

Consumer Voices

Research that invites consumers to voice their concerns and insights promotes opportunities to raise these concerns and insights during public consultation relating to sector reform. The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse team believes that consumer participation is critical to ensure home modification and maintenance services provide the standard of care that meets community expectations.

Participatory Evaluation

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project uses participatory evaluation to bring service providers into the process of research and evaluation. This process supports Home Modification and Maintenance service providers become invested and knowledgeable in assessing and improving their programs.

Action Research

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project works with service providers, carers, and consumers to:

- identify concerns about home modification service

- collect data

- learn more about key issues

- shape ongoing decisions and actions through research results

This cycle of identification, investigation, and action is a way for all stakeholder groups to collaborate on a reflective reform process.

Formative Evaluation

Rather than providing a report at the end of an evaluation only, the Home Modification Information Clearinghouse team will utilise formative evaluation to offer participants ongoing feedback as it conducts inquiry into the Home Modification and Maintenance programs.

Governance/Oversight

The Project Advisory Committee, in conjunction with the HMinfo Clearinghouse team, prioritises and selects research projects undertaken by the HMinfo Clearinghouse team. The Project Advisory Committee includes representatives from the government, consumer organisations and disability peaks. The HMinfo Clearinghouse team and the Project Advisory Committee are mindful of confidentiality, intellectual property issues and conflict of interest at all times. Specialist Review Panels provide feedback on Evidence Based Practice publications. The HMinfo Clearinghouse team collate feedback from the panels and amend publications as required. The Project Advisory Committee then has an opportunity to provide final comments prior to posting of the publications on the HMinfo Clearinghouse website. All Project Advisory Committee and Specialist Review Panel members are acknowledged on the website. HMinfo Clearinghouse team will prepare an Annual Report relating to progress of the Research Program. The Report will be presented to the Project Advisory Committee for discussion.

Human Ethics

The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project will adhere to the human subjects review process standards and procedures as set forth by the University of New South Wales found on their website. Information collected will not identify individual Home Modification and Maintenance schemes without prior permission.

Publication of Research Results

All publications resulting from HMinfo Clearinghouse research will acknowledge the contribution of participants. Participants will be consulted prior to submission of materials and, as appropriate, will be invited to collaborate as co-authors. In accordance with requirements relating to confidentiality of data, participants will jointly agree on access to and location of the research data. The Home Modification Information Clearinghouse project will own all research results and has the right to copyright, publish, disclose, and disseminate any research results developed under the funding contract with the Department of Family & Community Services – Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC). Consent from ADHC is required prior to publication of any materials containing proprietary or confidential information.

Responsibilities of the Research Team

1. Before initiating a research proposal, the research team will gather evidence to determine whether data already available can be used to meet the emerging information need.

2. All members of the research team will become familiar with relevant laws, regulations, or administrative procedures that may affect the data collection activity. Gaining informed consent will ensure that respondents are made aware of these laws where the laws might affect participation, responses, or uses of the data. **Example:** *privacy regulations prohibit the release of individually identifiable data.*

3. All efforts will be made to minimize the time, cost, and effort required of data providers. Data collection will be scheduled, where possible, at the convenience of the data providers and with adequate time to respond. The HMInfo team will be mindful of the annual work cycles of the respondents. **Example:** *Do not ask services to respond to a survey in the middle of their peak service periods.*

4. Develop and implement processes to ensure that any materials developed are checked for accessibility and usability. This may be achieved through focus groups, cognitive laboratory sessions, or pilot testing. The purpose of these activities is to ascertain:

a) Each item is understandable to the respondent

b) The technical terms used are appropriate to the respondent

c) The questions are clear and unambiguous to the respondent

d) The items elicit a single response

e) The survey is not too much of a burden for the respondent

5. Whenever possible, conduct a "trial-run" in which results are made available to participants for feedback and validation purposes before public release.

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Data Collection Instruments

In designing data collection instruments, HMinfo Clearinghouse research team will:

1. Provide clear and detailed instructions for utilising the data collection instrument. Provide definitions and clarifying information for individual items and terms.
   Example: *Any on-line surveys constructed will contain a glossary defining specific terms and line-by-line instructions for completion the survey.*

2. Where practicable, definitions of data elements will be consistent with standard definitions and analytic conventions (i.e. calculations or methodologies). Where possible, definitions will be consistent with nationally recognised descriptions. This ensures the data reported is comparable to data reported by other agencies and organisations at the institutional, state, and federal levels. If standard definitions and/or analytic conventions are used, the sources of the definitions or conventions used will be stated.

3. Determine whether another organisation is already collecting data related to the items to be collected. If so, the team will obtain a copy of the relevant survey and consider using the same definitions and analytic conventions as a starting point for the HMinfo Clearinghouse survey. Alternatively, respondents may be asked to report Disability and Home Care (ADHC). Consent from ADHC is required prior to publication of any materials containing proprietary or confidential information.

4. Use standard language. Jargon and abbreviations will be minimised. Questions will be short and simple. Terms will be simple and exact.

5. Provide a "not applicable" response for questions that may not be applicable to all respondents.