



Meeting Minutes

HMinfo Advisory Committee Meeting

8 September 2022

3pm

Zoom

Welcome, Introduction, Attendance & Apologies

Konstantina Vasilakopoulou opened the meeting at 3.00pm.

Attending via Zoom

Prof Catherine Bridge (CB)	Home Modification Information Clearinghouse (HMinfo)
David Sinclair (DS)	Assistive Technologies Suppliers Australia (ATSA)
Douglas McDonald (DM)	National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)
Hayley Stone (HS)	Physical Disability Council of NSW (PDCN)
Jonathan Levy (JL)	Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA)
Nicholas Loder (NL)	NSW Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC)
Susan Dinley (SD)	Occupational Therapy Australia (OTA)

Apologies

Annette Hanly (AH)	SCOPE Home Access
Anthony Ryan (AR)	Young Care (YC)
David Clarke (DC)	Paraquad
Deborah Hammond (DH)	Occupational Therapy Australia (OTA)
Frank Riggio (FR)	A1 Building Solutions NSW
Greg Killeen (GK)	Spinal Cord Injuries Australia (SCIA)
Irene Stein (IS)	National Seniors Australia (NSA)
Karen Appleby (KA)	Council on Ageing NSW (COTA)
Katie Hammill (KH)	3 Bridges Community
Lyndal Millikan (LM)	iCare
Matthew Hilder (MH)	Wesley Mission
Peter Minogue (PM)	3 Bridges Community
Robyn Chapman (RC)	Assistive Technology Australia (ATA)
Steve Pretzel (SP)	Technology for Ageing and Disability WA (MOD.A)

Chair

Konstantina Vasilakopoulou Home Modification Information Clearinghouse (HMinfo)

Minute Taker

Victoria Wachter Home Modification Information Clearinghouse (HMinfo)

1. Approval of Minutes of Last Meeting and Matters Arising

Action

1.1 Approval of Minutes from 9 June 2022

A correction was noted for the Minutes from the meeting on 9 June 2022 (SD agency corrected from DVA to OTA). Minutes were then approved by the Committee members.

1.2 Follow up actions from 9 June 2022 meeting:

- Produce video about Clearinghouse – Video is currently in production about Clearinghouse service. Two from five videos completed.
- Use of QR codes on videos – Discussed with UNSW Branding team, who did not supportive using it. Will not be taken further.
- HMinfo to review National Construction Code when released – discussed later in meeting.
- Understand changes to DVA under new government – JL advised changes are minimal. Continues to sit under major portfolio of Defence, but now has two ministers (Minister and Assistant Minister).

1.3 Membership Update

Noted that two Advisory Committee Members have resigned since previous meeting – Andrew Chia from ATA (replaced by Robyn Chapman) and George Latter from Bunnings (yet to be replaced).

2. HMinfo Website

2.1 HMinfo Website Report

The Advisory Committee members were informed of HMinfo website visibility in period since last meeting. This included:

- Location of main audience (primarily NSW, VIC and QLD)
- Top 10 reads (top read 'Arranging HM Consumer factsheet')
- Top 10 downloads (top download 'Ramps')

2.2 HMinfo Website Development

Chatbot:

Chatbot is now live. KV demonstrated chatbot on HMinfo website.

Videos:

Two from five of the short videos have been completed. Will be uploaded to website in resources and homepage. HMinfo in process of completing a third about the Clearinghouse.

Microsite for consumers:

Microsite has been put on hold while HMinfo is in discussions with UNSW Branding team about website compliance with UNSW style guidelines. HMinfo will wait for further advice on changes required before microsite is developed.

3. Publications and Research Activities

3.1 HMinfo Publications

Recent

Two publications almost ready:

- 'Lifts as Home Modifications' – will have in a few days
- 'Activities, Participation, Accessibility and Safety in the Home Environment for Children and Young People with Physical Disabilities: A Systematic Review' – requires some editing

Future

KV asked Advisory Committee members to submit any suggestions for future publications.

3.2 Other Projects

Washbasins for wheelchair users project (Caroma) extended until June 2023. HMinfo having difficulty in recruiting participants for study. KV requested members advertise for recruits in company websites/social media where possible.

HS noted that PDCN has a database comprising people willing to participate in various projects. KV to send HS details about project

CB noted that our report has found wheelchair users cannot wash hands using current accessibility standards.

HMinfo (Jai) to provide HS with flyer advertising Caroma project.

3.3 Participation in events

- CB attended webinar '*Truth telling and Consequences: Alice in Dunderland*'. Focus on principles of design for people with mental health issues. CB will share the recording when she has access to it.
- KV to participate in '*UNSW Ageing Futures Institute Falls Event: Developing a Holistic Falls Prevention Program*'. For different disciplines to collaborate in research to prevent falls. Participants from Medicine, Arts, Build Environment, Population Health.

CB to share recording of webinar when available.

4. Other Business

Action

4.1 Changes in SSD Funding

Funding for FY22/23 has commenced. Some changes required to HMinfo workplan. Only 25% of funding to go to activities traditionally undertaken, with 75% to be 'reform' focussed. Challenging for HMinfo to find activities to assist other providers with reform. It is still unclear which is best program to fund HMinfo. Waiting for feedback from CHSP on submitted workplan, which has a focus on linguistically diverse groups.

DS noted that report from 'Assisted Technology for All' released recently. A key take away is the appetite for the new government to fund home modifications more effectively. It is a golden opportunity to put forward HMinfo approach to home modifications as cost effective strategy. Submissions for papers invited. Aiming to have policy for Minister in late October. DS to share ATSA's information with CB in relation to this.

DS to share relevant ATSA information with CB/HMinfo

Discussion around the National Construction Code Silver Accessibility Standards (regulations for new residential buildings).

4.2 Cost pressures of modifications

Discussion around cost pressures in carrying out home modifications currently. Cost of materials high and finding builders to complete minor modifications difficult.

6. Reports from Committee Members

NL

- Will send waterproofing link from Fair Trading.
- Act requiring Disability Inclusion Plans has been changed to include clarification around Specialist Disability Accommodation in NSW.
- Recently attended a talk by David Chandler regarding new system put out by Dept Fair Trading called 'iCert'. This ranks builders on range of criteria including governance, funding, engagement with quality consultants. Could be a good way to identify shonky developers.

NL to send links for waterproofing requirements from Fair Trading to HMinfo.

NL to send information on iCert.

HS

- PDCN and COTA involved in Better Building Homes campaign. Have developed a core steering group around this, strategizing around 2023 election. Focus on social media, reach out to independents, shadow ministry. Minimal traction with current government, so focussing on possible incoming government.
- PDCN recently conducted survey over 100+ members re: housing. Interesting results around impediments to home modifications for renters, lack of knowledge of available funding, lack of awareness of existing accessible designs for owners conducting their own modifications.

Action

- PDCN has reached out to other housing campaigners (e.g. Healthy Homes for Renters, Make Renting Fair) to join as a coalition ahead of upcoming election. Planning a government 'meet and greet' in November, and a panel session in early 2023 to question parties on position in lead up to election.
- Discussion around the difficulty in dealing with strata-managed dwellings and body corporates in getting home modifications approved.

DM

- Minor Home Modifications release has been slightly delayed due to a Ministerial announcement. Should be live by late September. Is about budgeting, easier connection, less time to get home modifications done (accounts for about 75% of home mods).

SD

- There is a problem with 'nit-picking' of home mod approvals in various funding bodies/legislation across Australia. Largely due to unqualified/inexperienced decision makers assessing quotes (i.e. not OTs).
- Need to be aware of fraud in home mods, particularly in NDIS. E.g. families getting quotes from friends, families getting quotes from buildings they own.
- DS – appetite to address fraud in NDIS taken a turn for the better with a recognition that it needed to be tackled. Appointed a DCO from taxation office to head up fraud. Lots of work to come in this area.

JL

- Having similar with others – access to builders, pricing, sticking to timeframes.
- Discussion around delays and shortages due to lack of skilled labour – OTs, builders, project managers; and shortages of materials – timber, steel etc. A big problem at the moment.

Close

KV closed the meeting at 4.25 pm.

Next Advisory Committee Meeting 8 December 2022