



Newsletter

Edition 41 | 11th October 2016



From the Editor

Welcome to our 2016 spring quarterly instalment of the HMinfo Newsletter. The trees are in bud and the sun is starting to shine, but it feels that we are hurtling fast towards the end of the year. This quarter has seen the Clearinghouse involved in a large number of activities. Last week we hosted our first of three co-design groups for the 'Do It Yourself' Point Of Sale (POS) resource that we are currently developing and I'm pleased to report that this was a fantastic event with a lot of active participation and discussion ably led by Dr Barlow.

Here at UNSW, I have worked with a number of colleagues from across disciplines and faculties to commence a UNSW Strategic Initiative to establish a Disability Studies Institute (DSI). This initiative is designed to position UNSW as an international leader in driving innovation and systemic change and it is intended that this will be directly informed by people with disability and their supporters. Essentially the proposal is to establish sustainable infrastructure for Australian and international interdisciplinary collaboration between UNSW scholars, industry and people with disability and their organisations. We believe that this infrastructure investment of several million dollars over the next few years will stimulate growth in innovative technologies and more effective policy responses to the universal experience of disability.

I am pleased to report that the preliminary results regarding Home Modification follow-up in the Hunter New England area have just been statistically analysed (part of a study that we collaborated on with Ms Jennifer Fishpool, the Allied Health Manager at Hunter New England Local Health District). The findings from the 15 question survey sent to Occupational Therapists found that 100% of participants reported they had used the telephone as a method to complete follow-up post environmental modifications, and 63.64% had conducted a face to face visit. Duty of care and the clients' diagnosis were most common (72.73%) factors reported to influence decision making around follow-up. So stay tuned for the full article on this and on the consumer experience of home modification as an intervention.

Collaboration across health areas and disciplines is important, and we anticipate more of these arrangements in the future. To this end, HMinfo has just joined a large clinical academic stream on Ageing as a part of the Academic Health Science Partnership (AHSP) Program. The AHSP was founded on the basis of partnership and collaboration, recognising that in this new economic and rapidly developing scientific research and healthcare environment single institutions struggle to remain internationally competitive. As a part of the Ageing initiative we are hoping to collaborate with many more occupational and allied health practitioners regarding home modification issues with a range of other interdisciplinary gerontology and health economic, vision and falls specialists over the coming years. We have also been involved with our friends across the ditch in designing and launching the Housing Choices, Decision Tools

and Their Importance for the Ageing Population, as a part of an Older Peoples Housing Summit in Wellington on 5th September (see <http://downsizing.goodhomes.co.nz/tools/>). We are now looking to collaborate with the Henry Holloran Trust to try and do something similar for Australia, hopefully a new project for 2017.

I have also just taken on the role of Steering Committee member for the Low Carbon Built Environment Knowledge Hub project in partnership with Australian Policy Online (APO) and the Global Building Performance Network (GBPN). This will build on some of the knowledge gained from the design, build and operation of HMinfo over the last twelve years and will assist in ensuring that we can achieve more evidence-based decision making that includes human diversity and promotes social inclusion in tandem with a more sustainable built environment going forward. Climate events are predicted to get worse and it is important that older people and people with disabilities living in the community are not adversely effected by power outages which could potentially cause mortality and morbidity. For instance, widespread failure of mechanical ventilation, hoists, pressure care and home automation systems with no power back-up are very serious failure outcomes and put the most vulnerable within our community at greater risk than most. For instance, it is anticipated that a hundreds of South Australians would have suffered with that States total power grid failure in September as unless back-up systems were in place and automatically cut over, even emergency services would have been unaware of the potential ramifications for community dwelling people who rely on these systems to age in place at home. This is a reason why it is critical to have Vulnerable people in emergencies policy and to ensure that emergency personnel know who is a risk and that there is a risk management strategy in place.

Last but not least, we have started a dialogue with the Australian Building Codes Board about proposed moves towards performance tools and with the full support of our Advisory Committee have drafted a letter to the National Construction Codes Board to try to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable Australians are not negatively impacted going forward as they were with the most recent changes to new ramp regulations.

HMinfo Research

Evidence Based Practice Review: Use of Colour for Safe Movement

This systematic review, similar to its preceding edition, examines to what extent colour application supports safe and independent movement of older people and individuals with vision impairment in their home. The ability to identify visual cues based on colour, provides people with information about position, direction and the surroundings when navigating the environment. This ability decreases in conjunction with getting older and/or the onset of a vision impairment. The appropriate application of colour and contrast is expected to assist in maintaining safe and independent movement for people with reduced or partial sight within and outside their home. Our previous review incorporated colour applications that could be regarded as appropriate or effective in relation to safe and independent movement of older people and individuals with vision impairment in their home environment. This new review aimed to confirm whether the colour solutions and interventions and their benefits described in the previous edition were still the most evidence-based one or if they needed to be revised based on newer research.

We concluded that most of effective colour applications and their benefits incorporated in the preceding edition were still appropriate. Three types of colour applications presented in the previous review have been confirmed effective to provide better visual cues for older people and individuals with vision impairment. These three types of colour applications consist of: the use of bright colours, colour coding and colour contrast. However, use of an aesthetically preferred colour, which is the fourth type outlined in the

previous edition, had insufficient evidence supporting its effectiveness compared to other applications. This review also confirmed that these interventions improved four aspects of movement of older people and individuals with vision impairment within their home environment, including: recognition of the surroundings; spatial orientation; independence and mood.

This review noted a greater emphasis on lightness/ brightness difference, rather than solely colour difference, as emphasising colour alone may not be sufficient to enable visual detection by older or more severely impaired eyes. New research is still required to assess whether colour difference actually plays more, less or equally important role than lightness/ brightness difference in visual tasks performed by older people and individuals with vision impairment. More definite and detailed characterisation of lightness/ brightness difference and colour difference regarding visual detection by people with reduced or partial sight can inform how these features should be used, positioned and specified in performance criteria when specifying expected building performance outcomes and accessibility standards.

Events

SA Dementia Forum 2016 - Forward Thinking - 26 Oct 2016

AAG 49th Conference: Re-Imagining our Future - 2 Nov 2016 - 4 Nov 2016

Bathroom Modifications Workshop - Brisbane 25 Nov 2016

ITAC 2016 - Empowering Care Technology

Publications by HMinfo Team

HMinfo research

Quinn, J. and Bridge C. (2016). Industry Factsheet: Slip Resistance of Ramps (2nd Ed.) July 12th, ISBN 978-0-7334-3654-3, Industry Checklist Series ISBN 978-0-7334-3466-5 www.homemods.info

Reports, journal articles and conference papers

Bridge, C., Demirbilek, O. & Mintzes, A. (2016) 'Transforming Inclusion: Designing in the Experience of Greater Technological Possibility'. Universal Design 2016: Learning from the past, designing for the future. Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Universal Design (UD 2016), York, United Kingdom, August 21-24, 2016. Edited by Petrie, H., et al. IOS Press, doi:10.3233/978-1-61499-684-2-143. pp. 143-152.

Carnemolla, P. K., & Bridge, C. (2016). Accessible Housing and Health-Related Quality of Life. International Journal of Architectural Research, 10(2). 38-50. <http://www.archnet-ijar.net/index.php/IJAR/article/view/977/pdf>

Bridge, C. Shuk, T & Sweatman, P. (2016) Asymmetric transfer force in sit to stand of healthy older people at different toilet heights. Proceedings of the Expert Scientific Meeting on Load Distribution Measurement July 27-30, 2016, University of Lisbon, Portugal p 45.

HMinfo Team



Associate Professor Catherine Bridge - Director
Dr Joanne Quinn - Research Associate
Judy Lim - Administrator
Helmut Hoss - Website Developer
Aldyfra Lukman - PhD student

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



Copyright © 2016 UNSW Built Environment. Authorised by Built Environment UNSW.