



Home Modification Information Clearinghouse

Never Stand Still

Built Environment

Newsletter

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From the Editor

Welcome to our quarterly instalment of the HMinfo Newsletter.

The 'Do it Yourself' (DIY) home modification project came to a close at the end of June and with her contract at an end, we lost Sophia Maalsen to Human Geography at Macquarie University. A key finding of the cost-benefit component of this work was that at a DIY home modification level as confirmed in the retail data of at least 15,000 modifications per year, at the 10% basecase rate of reduced falls, the annual cost offset to health and aged care services would be in the order of \$3.75 million per year. The retail data indicate potentially 3 or 4 fold this quantity of modifications, in which case the net cost saving could perceivably be above \$10 million and potentially as high as \$15 million per annum. Since June, we have been finalising the report and organising its peer-review so stay tuned for its forthcoming publication as we will be releasing in the next month the Final peer-reviewed report and a number of Ethnographic videos of consumers who undertook DIY Modifications.

After finishing our report on the upgrade of Crown Street for Sydney City Council using our [Livability App](#) I had the opportunity to work over July, with the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (CEUD) which was established by the National Disability Authority (NDA) under the Irish Disability Act of 2005. The National Disability Authority in Ireland wants greater involvement of older people and people with disabilities in community consultations as lack of consultation undermines government strategy for personal choice, greater autonomy and productivity outcomes in line with International Human Rights Frameworks. CEUD has recently published "[Shared Space, Shared Surfaces and Home Zones from a Universal Design Approach for the Urban Environment in Ireland](#)" and this report explores contemporary national and international practices and thinking on Shared Spaces, Shared Surfaces and Home Zones and to investigate these concepts from a Universal Design approach in the Irish urban environment. One of its key recommendations in relation to the implementation of Shared Spaces, Shared Surfaces and Home Zones is explicit consultation with users most likely to be disadvantaged by its implementation. To this end, I ran two workshops using the [Livability App](#) which leverages smart phone and iPad technology. The App was originally developed with the support of FACS-ADHC for evaluating town centres. However in Woodquay, Galway and Dublin city we were using it to evaluate public streets and shared space use, which can be quite controversial for those with impairments as their views are often misunderstood or overlooked in traditional Town Hall gatherings. Livability and social participation rely on neighbourhoods that are suitable for living in; that is both habitable and comfortable.

Everyone reading this newsletter, would be aware that older people are staying in their own homes for longer and a range of conditions that were once treated purely and mainly in hospital are often managed at home with community home care services. Restorative approaches to home care have been proposed as a potential method to reduce dependency in home care provision and to improve our capacity to cope with growing demand for care, via more timely and preventative services. So it is unsurprising that a draft discussion paper concerning the commencement of Restorative Short Term Care (STRC) is the most recent paper that the Department of Social Services is seeking feedback on the [STRC Programme Policy Consultation Paper](#). The closing date for feedback is 10am, Monday 19 October 2015.

Restorative Care is an approach whose time has come, with clinicians, researchers and government of the opinion that current home care practices and funding imperatives that favour short, task-focused home care by substituting function with assistance, may result in a premature reduction in important physical and social activities (Ryburn Wells & Foreman, 2009*). Interestingly the same authors found evidence that home modification may be cost-effective over the longer term. The most recent work by one of our PhD students, Phillippa Carnemolla found the same, and her thesis found an overall reduction of care by 42% with significant improvement of quality of life across all effect categories. This is a new research area that requires more research in order to evaluate the most effective types of interventions, and questions remain regarding which client groups are likely to benefit the most.

Last but not least, we have been working hard behind the scenes to improve the website by producing clear policy and procedures to better enable website management and by automation and streamlining of our listserv bounce-backs. Helmut Hoss our website contractor has also been busy fixing broken links, better categorised FAQs and introducing more advanced search facilities for news and events. We have also enabled more website statistics collection and have updated our Privacy Policy page in line with our expanded Google Analytics usage.

* Ryburn, B., Wells, Y. and P, Foreman (2009). Enabling independence: restorative approaches to home care provision for frail older adults. *Health and Social Care in the Community*. 17(3), 225-234.

Home Modification Resources

Journal paper review - Understanding home modifications impact on clients and their family's experience of home: A qualitative study

Aplin et al. (2015), found that while Home Modifications aim to enhance safety and occupational performance in the home because of the complexity and unique meaning of the home, home modifications interventions can impact recipients and their families both positively and negatively. This qualitative study found that three themes, workmanship, consultation or involvement in decision-making, and the societal dimension of the home environment influenced the outcomes of the modifications and the home modification process. Importantly the authors concluded that the negative outcomes and poor consultation experiences reported in their study, suggested the need for occupational therapists to better understand their client's personal experience of home and to comprehensively follow-up and evaluate these following home modifications.

Aplin, T., de Jonge, D. and Gustafsson, L. , 2015, '*Understanding home modifications impact on clients and their family's experience of home: A qualitative study*', *Australian Occupational Therapy Journal*, Vol. 62 , pp.123-131

Website review - <http://universaldesign.ie/>

The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design is our featured website for this newsletter as they have a number of new publications which many might find helpful. The CEUD is part of the National Disability Authority but is dedicated to enabling the design of environments that can be accessed, understood and used regardless of age, size and ability. Under their "Building for Everyone: A Universal Design Approach" webpage they provide comprehensive best practice guidance on how to design, build and manage buildings and spaces so that they can be readily accessed and used by everyone, regardless of age, size ability or disability.

The Building for Everyone series is available for free download in accessible PDF format at <http://universaldesign.ie/Built-Environment/Building-for-Everyone>.

They also provide Universal Design guidance for:

- [Homes in Ireland](#); and
- [Dementia Friendly Dwellings for People with Dementia, their Families and Carers](#)

Events

WORKSHOP: Introduction to Home Modifications - Darwin, 11 Nov

[Link](#)

WORKSHOP: Advanced Home Modifications: Exploring Case Studies - Darwin, 12 Nov

[Link](#)

2015 Accessible & Affordable Housing Forum - Sydney, 19 Nov

[Link](#)

WORKSHOP: A Practical Introduction to Home Modifications - Vic, 27-28 Nov

[Link](#)

Publications by HMinfo Team

HMinfo research

A Systematic Review of the International Evidence on Home Modifications

The Enabling Built Environment Program (EBEP) recently completed a Systematic Review of the international evidence on Home Modifications. This is the first Systematic Review of its kind and was funded by Home Modifications Australia (MOD.A) with the objective of assessing the evidence of health and social effects following home modifications.

The research undertaken found that home modifications can lead to a range of positive, health related improvements. The evidence was analysed thematically, and the resulting themes include (in order of decreasing prevalence within the evidence base) improved function; improved physical health and wellbeing; supported caregiving; economic effectiveness; supporting ageing process; and increased social participation. While many of the home modification interventions were targeted at

older community dwelling adults, research also investigated the effects of home modifications on people living with a disability or chronic illness regardless of age.

The full review is currently available to members of MOD.A, but will be made more widely available in the coming months as a paper is being submitted to a journal for review. Click [here](#) for information about [MOD.A](#).

Carnemolla, P. & Bridge. C (2015) Systematic Review; Evidence on home modifications 1st ed. Sydney: Enabling Built Environment Program, University of New South Wales.

Reports, journal articles and conference papers

Vizel I, Laragy C, Gendera S, Fisher KR, Jenkinson S, Hill T, Finch K, Shaw W, Bridge C. Moving to my home: housing aspirations, transitions and outcomes of people with disability August 2015, AHURI Final Report No. 246

[Link](#)

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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](#).

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