



**The University of Sydney**

Faculties of Health Sciences and Architecture

**The Home Modification:  
Information Clearinghouse Project**

## **Advisory Committee Minutes**

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**Meeting of the HM Information Clearinghouse Advisory Committee**

**24<sup>th</sup> May 2007**

**At 3.00 p.m.**

**J003 Meeting Room,**

**The Faculty of Health Sciences**

**University of Sydney**

### **Present**

Catherine (Katy) Bridge (Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney)

Ian Maxwell (Wesley HMMS)

Stacey Sheppard-Smith (NSW HMMS State Council)

Col James (Faculty of Architecture)

Joe Harrison (Disability Council of NSW)

Melinda Patterson (Council of Social Services)

### **Apologies**

Jane Bringolf (Independent Living Centre of NSW)

Peter Phibbs (Faculty of Architecture, University of Sydney)

Steve Malvern (NSW State Wide Home Modification Service)

Robyn Chapman (Physical Disability Council of NSW)

Max Flynn (DADHC)

### **Chair**

Catherine (Katy) Bridge (Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney)

### **Note taker**

Lyndal Millikan

*Notes*

*Actions*

*1. Welcome, introduction & apologies*

Katy opened the meeting at 3.00 p.m. Apologies were noted.

Minutes from the last meeting

Melinda Patterson advised that she had sent her apologies for last meeting. This was noted and will be added to the last meeting minutes. The group moved to accept the minutes once this amendment made..

**LM** to arrange this to be added. **MP** to amend and put minutes on website.

**Notes****Actions****3. Clearinghouse update**

Webstats:

Katy advised of the following;

- Significant increase in hits (approx 800 pcm)
- Increase in return visitations (approx 300 plus pcm)
- Increase in use from other states and territories in Australia
- Increase in hits from Canada, UK and USA
- Site has been accessed by users in 57 countries

Stacey felt that this kind of data would support the Clearinghouse becoming a National entity.

Katy advised of an error within the site that resulted in users having to log in twice.

Currently the data from the Clearinghouse site and the Webstats data are not correlating. Katy is the process of investigating this.

**CB** is in the process of arranging for this site error to be corrected.

**Systematic Review Updates**

A number of new systematic reviews are currently in progress. These include;

1. Evidence for Home Modification Effectiveness – in progress
2. Barriers to Home Modification – in progress

The review “Designing home environment for people with cognitive impairment who display aggressive or self injurious behaviour” is complete.

This paper generated discussion on the following;

- That the paper serves a dual purpose, highlighting issues for clients in care, especially those in group homes of firstly, what is environmentally related and secondly what is care related?.
- Katy briefly went through the topics in the paper commenting certain issues, such as clients needing 'time out' places, use of safety glass and use of protection for items like TV's and appliances.
- That the paper may need to be reviewed in respect to the new HACC Home Mods Guidelines.

**CB** in process of finalising these for Committee review.

- Katy requested the Committee review the paper and forward any feedback as to how the publication could be

**Notes**

improved to meet their client group.

- That the paper would be beneficial to those beyond DADHC and may benefit the Community Housing and NGO sector. This led to a discussion re the publicity (or lack thereof) of the HACC HomeMods Service in the community. Melinda queried if there should be further work done to educate the community (particularly the young disabled) of the service. There was general consensus that this would be a positive thing but the flow on effect to HACC would need to be considered in terms of costs, hours etc.

**Consumer Fact Sheet**

The reviewed Consumer Fact Sheet on Arranging Home Modifications was passed around to the group for comment. It was decided within the MHinfo team for the fact sheet to be as generic as possible and to provide links to state specific information.

Brief discussion as to how best to get this publication out to consumers.

It was felt that further clarification of eligibility issues would be undertaken. Also that the concept of 'subsidy' be used and explained in the first paragraph.

Spelling and grammar errors were commented upon.

Following Advisory Committee review, the document can be presented to the consumer panel for review. It was noted that all new publications are required to have the HACC logo in place.

**Hot topic Summaries/occasional papers**

The Occasional paper on "Understanding Indigenous Australians for more effective provision of Home Modification Services" is completed and will be posted on the Clearinghouse website this week.

General consensus indicate this was a valuable publication and Stacey queried if a summary version be prepared as a practical user guide or develop a checklist for users (especially for clinicians and modification providers).

Col advised of the new resource of the Indigenous Atlas in Fisher Library (basement) plus 4 staff.

**Actions**

**Advisory Committee** to review and forward any feedback to **CB**

**Advisory Committee members** to review / comment and forward back to Lyndal Millikan.

**LM** to continue fine tuning the document and forward to **CB** when ready for review by the Consumer Panel.

**TvB** to post on website

**HMinfo team** to discuss at next team meeting.

**Notes**

Discussion on the recruitment of Indigenous staff for the Home Mods Service.

Ian advised that Wesley have formed a partnership with Mt Drunit TAFE for apprentices to provide Home Mods as part of their training (at nil cost to the consumer). Ian acknowledged the need to increase the networks and relationships with the apprenticeships programmes further.

Brief discussion on the insertion of Indigenous workers as a percentage of work force to reflect population numbers. Consensus that this would be a positive step but acknowledgement difficult to put in place. Col suggested it could be made a prerequisite for contracts and tenders.

**Suggested hot topics / occasional paper / systemic review / fact sheets**

- Comparative or cost benefit analysis of ramps vs lifts vs garaventas etc.
- Bridging and Berming as a level access solution
- Rural and Remote Issues in Home Modifications
- Roles of professional in the Mods Modifications Sector
- Best Practice Guidelines – legal liabilities / medicolegal reporting for Home Modifications
- Review of FACSIA (Family and Community Services Indigenous Affairs) Aboriginal Housing Guidelines.
- OTs guide to “A Whole of Need Assessment”
- Consumer FactSheets – warranty issues
- Colour and impact of colour on occupational performance
- Concepts of Home, Home-like and ‘homey’

**Actions**

**CB & HMInfo team**  
to discuss at  
meeting

**SS** discuss with  
State Council

**Events & Training**

Carex 2007. Was a successful event – the MHInfo stall (and the State Council stall) was busy most of the time.

Noted lack of awareness of HACC services by GPs. State Council may look at education for in partnership with Division of General Practice or the AMA.

**SS** to forward a  
selection of  
photographs to **CB**.

**Annual Report**

The Annual Report is complete and was given to members of the committee for a final review. General comment on the photographs chosen was that some of the tasks photographed

**Notes**

may not give an accurate representation of the work Home Modifications services are able to complete. Stacey offered to forward some photographs from the State Councils' collection for this purpose.

**Actions**

Ongoing

**Other Clearinghouse Projects*****My Virtual Home project***

Next stage of this is the trial.

Katy, Lyndal and Katrina will be meeting with Paul Condon next week to discuss next step.

Ongoing

***DADHC Group Homes Design Guidelines Revision***

Second advisory committee meeting held today.

Currently in process of interviews.

Literature review in progress – very complex.

AS part of Planning NSW, new metropolitan planning strategy a number of SEP's have been removed, including affordable housing and group home SEP.

**TvB** to place item on website

***Other business***

Stacey will forward promotional material for the 1 day workshop in July for general dissemination.

Stacey advised the State Council have received 12 months non recurrent funding for an OT specialist and RTO specialist have been approved and are looking to recruit soon.

Katy in New Zealand last week; release of Accessible Housing Report and Katy did the Commentary for this Report which will posted on the MHInfo website.

Brief discussion on why OTs need to draw scale diagrams. Katy advised it is a legal liability for OTs as it is a communiqué between the OT and modification provider and as such protects the OT from negligence torts.

***Members of Advisory Committee leaving***

Melinda Patterson advised that due to workload issues, she

**CB** to approach Christine Regan

**Notes**

would be retiring from her role with the Clearinghouse.

Joe Henson advised that a number of people at the Disability Council will be leaving (including him).

**Next Advisory Committee Meeting**

The venue for the next meeting is yet to be decided, however the meeting may be held on the August 2007 at the Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Sydney.

**Actions**

regarding a successor for Melinda.

**CB** to approach Dougie Herd regarding a replacement for Joe.