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Disability Services

Housing Modifications; A funding silo or part of a package?




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Outline of presentation:

- What are Environmental Support Services?
- All about Housing Modifications
- Can we do it better?

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Environmental Support Services are:



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Equipment and Modification Services are:

- Mobility equipment
- Personal care equipment
- Housing modifications
- Vehicle purchase and modifications
- Hearing aids and hearing assistive equipment
- Vision equipment
- Communication assistive technology

Accessible & Enable NZ

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Guiding Principles – Equipment and Modification Services should:

- Make an effective contribution
- Represent value for money
- Be allocated fairly
- Support sustainability

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So, why should we modify houses?

To restore or enable:

- independent living
- safety
- privacy
- confidence, and
- dignity

for disabled people and their families or whanau.



When someone is disabled by their housing, the options are:

- do nothing
- modify the existing home
- move home
- provide equipment
- provide support



Why do housing modifications?



Woman stuck in bath

Austrian firefighters rescued an 81-year-old woman who spent four days stuck in her bath because she didn't have enough strength to get out.

Neighbours reported hearing knocking and called authorities to the woman's apartment in Linz. The woman was treated for exposure.

Dominion Post 2007



Who can help?

Call the OT first!

- the Specialised Assessor



Specialised Assessor :

- Does Assessment
- Completes application for funding
- Checks the finished job



But does our model create a funding silo?



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Who else should be involved in the process?

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The process should be a **partnership** –

so that it meets the needs identified by the disabled person:

- sensitively
- efficiently
- cost-effectively

So, do we need to think about housing modifications in a different way?

Because – they are rarely an end ...

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The “Kaiser Permanente Triangle” – for the management of patients with long-term conditions

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Housing modifications; three levels of need

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Level of need	Types of modification	Responsibility?
Basic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • internal / external rails 	<input type="checkbox"/> Assess need <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OT?
Generic skill level required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic ramps • door widening • hand held shower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs Assessor? • OT Assistant? • Person/family? <input type="checkbox"/> Organise?

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Examples of services in UK :

- Staying Put
- Care and Repair

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Level of need	Types of modification	Responsibility?
High Advanced skill level required by Specialised Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complex ramps • Safety glass • Fences • Level access showers • Low rise lifts 	<input type="checkbox"/> Assess need and make application - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OT – in collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Person/family – NASC – Others as necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Organise – Accessable / Enable New Zealand

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Level of need	Types of modification	Responsibility?
Complex Highly advanced skill level required by Specialised Assessor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alterations / additions beyond footprint of the home • Extensive multiple modifications • Lifts 	<input type="checkbox"/> Assess need and make application - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OT – in collaboration with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Person/family – NASC – Others as necessary <input type="checkbox"/> Organise – Accessable / Enable New Zealand

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High Cost and Complex Housing Modifications

2004 – MoH requested more active NASC involvement in assessment process

Why?

- to gain more cohesive service co-ordination
- to gain more effective budget management
- to understand more about outcomes

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High Cost and Complex Housing Modifications

DRC Report 2005 –

Survey of Specialised Assessors:

- 10% had substantial communication with NASC
- 35% had **some** communication
- 54% had **little** or **none**

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What's been the outcome?

- Almost all applications are endorsed by NASC → “sign-off”
- Negative feedback from Specialised Assessors
- Timing of NASC involvement – usually at the 11th hour

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What's been the outcome?

- ❑ Different understanding of the reasons for collaboration
- ❑ Inefficient allocation of resources
- ❑ ↑ Applications + expenditure

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Some Facts and Figures (Enable New Zealand)

- ❑ \$7.3m spent on housing modifications in 2007/08
- ❑ 64% of this for people >65 yrs
- ❑ 12% for children <16 years
- ❑ \$2m spent in first ¼ of 2008/09 → increased demand if trend continues
- ❑ Some DHBs higher spend per population

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So was the money well spent?





We don't really know!

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So

- is it worth persevering with our current process, and
- if so, for whom, and
- what could good practice look like?



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Do we need to aim for a **partnership** approach?



What could good practice look like?

For people with straightforward needs – needing only basic modifications →

- Comprehensive assessment of each person's needs
- Simple solutions/needs dealt with **quickly and efficiently**



What could good practice look like?

For people with high and complex needs – needing advanced and complex modifications

- Effective collaboration
- Clear pathways and responsibilities
- Integrated planning – all options considered



Why change current practice?

- Children (and their families) with challenging behaviours might get more timely and appropriate supports



Why change current practice?

- Resources might be better allocated
- Complex and high cost housing modifications would be considered as **part of a package**



Why change current practice?

And finally

- People might be better supported to make decisions

