

## Outsourcing Community Service Delivery

**Organisation:** NSW Home Modification and Maintenance Services State Council

**Name:** Ms Stacey Sheppard-Smith

**Position:** Executive Officer

**Date Received:** 2/05/2012



2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012

Mr Kevin Anderson MP  
Member for Tamworth  
Chair, Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Anderson

### **Inquiry into Outsourcing Government Community Service Delivery**

On behalf of the NSW Home Modification and Maintenance Services (HMMS) State Council, please find enclosed State Council's response to the Legislative Assembly Committee on Community Services - *Inquiry into Outsourcing Government Community Service Delivery*.

Specifically, State Council is now providing feedback in relation to increasing cost effectiveness and improved local service provision pertaining to Home Modification services and events, i.e. assessment, construction, monitoring and Quality Assurance events, currently being delivered directly by the Government in New South Wales.

As Executive Officer, I am also enclosing a copy of my State Council Report for 2011 for your perusal.

Established in 1994, the NSW HMMS State Council is the peak organisation for the HMMS industry in NSW. A not-for-profit organisation, it is committed to the interests of Home Modification and Maintenance Service providers to ensure optimum client outcomes and service delivery are achieved via capacity-building initiatives and sector development. For more detailed information about State Council, see our website at [www.nswhmms.org.au](http://www.nswhmms.org.au).

The NSW HMMS State Council looks forward to discussing the information with the Legislative Assembly at a time convenient to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Stacey Sheppard-Smith  
Executive Officer, NSW HMMS State Council

L059-12

New South Wales Home Modification and Maintenance Services State Council Inc.

The information provided refers to segments of the Terms of Reference, specifically:

**a) State Government processes, outcomes and impacts of transferring housing, disability and home care services from Government to non-Government agencies:**

The NSW HMMS State Council is the peak body for Home Modification service providers designated and funded initially through the HACC program. Several Government departments within the NSW Family and Community Services Department provide or contract home modification assessment, construction and Quality Assurance services for clients who fall under their current jurisdiction, e.g.

Direct Service Provision provided = ✓

Contracted out or supplied through a different department = ☐

Department	OT Assessment and Prescription of Home Mods	Construction of Home Mods	Monitoring/ Project Management of Home Mods Construction	QA sign-off or inspection of Home Mods – Construction	QA sign-off or inspection of Home Mods – OT/Client outcomes	Training for OT prescription of minor and major/complex modifications on a Continuous Quality Improvement framework	Training for both AS1428 public disability access and installation of appropriate, structurally safe Individualised Home Modifications on a Continuous Quality Improvement framework
Dept of Housing	☐	☐	✓	✓	☐	☐	☐
ADHC Group Homes	✓	☐	☐	☐	✓	☐	☐
ADHC Early intervention	✓	☐	☐	☐	✓	Some	☐
Public Works	n/a	n/a	✓	✓	☐	☐	Some
Dept of Veterans Affairs	☐	☐	☐	☐	✓	Some	☐
NSW HMMS service provider network supported through their Peak Body the NSW HMMS State Council	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Essentially, for 25 years the HACC Home Modification program has invested in capacity building to Home Modification service providers in order to cover all **SEVEN (7)** of the above service provision/monitoring/review systems for the two integral parts of home modification work – OT prescription and construction. Over this time, it has become apparent that the processes that achieve the best, long-term, cost efficient, client focused home modification outcomes are based on the above 7-event system. The NSW HMMS State Council has ensured that these mechanisms have been developed, refined and supported and are in an optimal position to implement them to all clients receiving home modification services involving Government funding.

As the Home Modification program in NSW is currently under review by ADHC but is not yet at the stage of complete model review and given that it appears that FACS is looking to potentially devolve some or all of their direct community service provision, it would seem that there is an excellent window of opportunity to consider utilising and expanding the already embedded Home Modification program in order to create:

- equitable, cost effective and quality Home Modification service delivery through approved local providers for both community service clients and other NGO service providers who may take on the devolved community services currently provided directly by State Government;
- provision of consistent certification, monitoring and QA processes to all community service clients and community service providers who require Home Modifications for their clients;
- provision of experienced, efficient and quality advice and advocacy services (or a definitive source to network them with the appropriate experts e.g. public Access Consultants) to community service providers who may take on the devolved community services currently provided directly by State Government;
- capacity build (through established funding mechanisms) a program that already delivers home modification OT training, assessment, prescription; construction training, design and implementation, project management; and a highly developed, efficient Quality Assurance system for both construction and OT prescription outcomes.

***b) The development of appropriate models to monitor and regulate service providers to ensure probity, accountability and funding mechanisms to provide quality assurance for clients;***

Through established funding mechanisms, the **RISK MANAGEMENT** of the NSW HMMS program has been proactively addressed by the NSW HMMS State Council since 2007. By default on the part of Government (and significant support through ADHC in recent years) and by design on the part of the NSW HMMS State Council, cost efficient and productive Quality and Assurance outcomes have been achieved by the sector for major and complex modifications. These processes lend themselves easily to be available to the full concert of programs currently delivered directly by the State Government – see below:

## Quality Assurance Program

Whilst the NSW HMMS State Council assists with building sector capacity via training and resource development, it also acts as an independent regulator of the HMMS industry with regard to major/complex modifications in NSW specifically through the implementation of the Quality Assurance Program.

The Quality Assurance Program began in 2007 and has played a pivotal role in regulating and risk management for the HMMS sector in NSW. The Quality Assurance Program monitors the quality of construction work and is an adjunct and valuable reference to ADHC's Integrated Monitoring Framework. The Program's initiatives also include technical training and resource development.

### ***c) The development of appropriate levels of integration among service providers in rural and regional areas to ensure adequate levels of supply and delivery of service;***

By devolving the Home Modification elements of current State Government Departments currently providing those services to the NSW HMMS State Council and its network of providers, the Assembly would be pre-empting the level of supply and capacity to delivery service problems of NGO/Not-for-profit service providers who may take on services that include a Home Modification element in rural and regional areas.

The NSW HMMS State Council has built a network and database of providers to ensure service provision in all elements involved in Home Modifications in remote, rural, regional and metropolitan areas. Utilising this established network would save 'middle man' administrative costs of NGO providers trying to address home modification issues for their clients.

### ***d) Capability frameworks ensuring that community agencies are not overly burdened by regulatory constraints***

The extensive regulatory constraints involved in the provision of Home Modification services have already been addressed or are in the process of sector development under the imprint of the NSW HMMS State Council. These processes, again involving a default government position and NSW HMMS State Council proactive implementation, are in relation to most direct Home Modification services currently being provided directly by other State Government entities:

- well established with built-in processes for Continuous Quality Improvement;
- have proven positive outcomes for both short-term and long-term quality outcomes for clients and cost efficiencies for both community service and health public funding;
- have established and flexible processes for accommodating regulatory constraints while maintaining client focused service provision.

***e) Enhanced capacity building and social integration in the delivery of services by local providers***

Reported regularly through the NSW HMMS State Council network of home modification service providers is the confusion and distress of a variety of clients who receive inequitable levels and standards of Home Modification services through a range of Government departments/programs. This also provides a confusing maze for referral agencies and most specifically for assessing and referring OTs who need to know a vast variety of access and service conditions for what is essentially exactly the same type of service required by all clients.

Home modifications are home modifications and all clients funded through public means should have an equitable level of access and quality service provision with safety nets in place to ensure they receive the most cost effective, long-term outcomes.

It must be emphasised that Home Modification services (if carried out correctly in the first place) are usually a one-off service and better handled by those services that specialise in this service – allowing NGOs who may take on the devolved services currently being supplied directly by the State Government to concentrate on developing and implementing their capacity building for their particular program, their client relationships and/or care plans for individual clients.

***f) Future employment trends, expectations and pay equity for women employed in the non-Government sector***

By devolving the Home Modification element of current Government direct service providers, State Council's network of qualified providers could offer a quality, practical and consistent stream of AS 1428 and individualised client prescription assessment/design/construction education administered through the NSW HMMS State Council for:

- a. Apprentices learning construction trades within TAFE NSW (currently there is minimal instruction in this area); and
- b. OTs attending NSW University Courses (currently there is minimal instruction in this area)

***g) Incentives for private philanthropy in the funding of community services***

The NSW HMMS State Council could supply data of pre-modified homes that may be suitable for purchase as Group Homes or, in a future 'packaged' environment, could be an advice and advocacy service for clients wishing to purchase suitably modified homes without having to rely on local Real Estate knowledge of whether implemented modifications would be suitable for their needs and/or what other level of modifications may be required.

The network of providers managed by the NSW HMMS State Council could potentially also assist in promoting a philanthropic program where members of the community may want to donate their homes/modified homes to Group Home or residential care programs.