

**INQUIRY INTO SERVICES PROVIDED OR FUNDED BY  
THE DEPARTMENT OF AGEING, DISABILITY AND  
HOME CARE**

**Organisation:** NSW Home Modification and Maintenance Services Council  
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1<sup>st</sup> August 2010

Attn: The Director of Social Issues  
Legislative Council, Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Ministers

On behalf of the NSW Home Modification and Maintenance Services State Council, I would like to thank you for providing the opportunity to give feedback regarding the Department of Ageing, Disability and Homecare.

The NSW Home Modification and Maintenance Services State Council is the peak organisation for the HMMS sector across NSW. HMMS provide modification and maintenance work to the frail aged and people with disabilities to ensure their continued safety and independence at home. Representing 106 HMMS in NSW, the NSW HMMS State Council's key focus is capturing the key issues for the sector and providing capacity building initiatives to strengthen service delivery. As such, State Council has extensive dialogue with both Service Providers and ADHC.

Attached is a summary of the most pertinent issues adversely affecting the HMMS industry in NSW. In support of the summary is a copy of the Executive Officer's Annual Report for 2008-2009 FYE which addresses most points of the Legislative Council's Terms of Reference.

Also, there are a number of relevant points I would like to draw to the Legislative Council's attention:

### **Minimum Data Set**

The NSW HMMS State Council supports the collection of the information for the Minimum Data Set (MDS) however, as displayed in the Executive Officer's Annual Report, there is a vast amount of information regarding unmet need, client waiting lists and funding shortfalls which is not adequately captured in the HACC sector. Whilst the MDS is used for planning purposes by both the Commonwealth and State Government, the MDS only focuses on past episodes of service and therefore does not capture the whole picture. State Council wishes to alert the Commonwealth to this issue with an aim to improving data collection for future planning purposes.

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## Funding Shortfalls

NSW HMMS are not adequately funded to meet the demand for service. This is exacerbated by high commercial contractor and material costs - resulting in reduced outputs and extensive waiting lists. ADHC are currently reviewing the NSW HMMS Industry to gain efficiencies which I believe is a good first step. However it is my firm belief that planning within ADHC local planning areas and ADHC Central Office needs to be improved to accurately address the waiting lists and funding shortfalls of all HACCC Service Types. Please refer to Page 27 of the Executive Officer's Annual Report for further information.

## ADHC's Tendering Process in the HMMS Sector

In June 2008, Wesley HMMS successfully tendered for an open modification and maintenance tender in the Cumberland Prospect Region of Sydney where an existing HMMS Service structure was already in place. State Council addressed a number of concerns with ADHC regarding this tender and they were as follows:

- ADHC's tendering allocation processes did not adequately address either the HMMS already available or the geographical distances between existing and new providers
- The duplication issues and inefficiencies of referral pathways and processes created by having multiple Services in the same Local Planning Areas
- The inefficiencies of allocating new funding to a new Provider when the existing Provider already required additional funding to cope with increased demand
- Had funding had been allocated to the existing HMMS, service provision could have been implemented immediately. Instead, the new Provider required set up costs and lead in time to provide service
- Panel representation for review of the tenders seemed limited and did not include representatives with knowledge of the HMMS sector licensing and building expertise

State Council made recommendations for ADHC to review and strengthen their tendering processes in the future to incorporate the above points however, no real action has taken place to address these issues and improve practice. Please refer to Page 45 of the Executive Officer's Annual Report for further information.

If you require any further information or narrative to my Annual Report, please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 6622 8386.

Yours faithfully

Stacey Sheppard-Smith  
Executive Officer  
NSW HMMS State Council  
L018

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HMMS Process	Issue	Outcome
<b>A HACC Eligible client is assessed by an Occupational Therapist in NSW Health for Home Modifications</b>	<p>The following scenarios apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increasing numbers of referrals due to the ageing population and younger people with disabilities has increased overall demand for OT assessment and Home Modifications</li> <li>Extensive waiting lists exist for clients to be assessed by Occupational Therapists in Metropolitan Sydney and Regional Areas</li> <li>There is a serious shortage of experienced Occupational Therapists in Rural and Remote areas of NSW</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client waits for a comprehensive OT assessment - only part of which may be in relation to a Home Modification</li> <li>Lengthy delays result in the Clients/Carer's safety being at risk</li> <li>Results: Falls and long stays in hospitals until Modifications can be completed. This is a drain on NSW Health funding.</li> <li><b>Please refer to Page 23 of the Executive Officer's Annual Report for further information</b></li> </ul>
<b>Client is referred to their local HMMS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clients are prioritised amongst competing workloads, funding shortfalls and availability of Staff/ Contractors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level 1 Services have extensive waiting lists as they cannot keep up with the demand for service and funding is finite</li> <li>Clients can be waiting for extensive time periods for their Modifications to be completed</li> <li>Major Modifications over \$5000 have extensive funding shortfalls and high demand for Service - a bottleneck now exists for work to be completed. It can take up to two years for Clients with complex care needs to be serviced. This results in significant delays in discharge from Acute, Rehab and other care facilities.</li> <li>Where there are lengthy delays, the client can require OT re-assessment</li> <li>Service provision is hampered by lack of funding and resources</li> <li><b>Please refer to Page 27 of the Executive Officer's Annual Report for further information</b></li> </ul>
<b>Building Works in Progress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The increased cost of materials and commercial Contractor prices is increasing the price of Modifications</li> <li>Non-Recoverable Service operational costs are also increasing (ie. Petrol)</li> <li>ADHC's CPI Funding does not adequately meet increased costs to meet Service delivery.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As funding is finite, less outputs/ client outcomes can be achieved</li> <li>Funding shortfalls have resulted in extensive waiting lists for clients requiring Home Modifications</li> <li>Community Support Services such as HomeCare (who assist with personal care) can be delayed if Home Modifications cannot be completed to ensure the safety of paid Care Workers. Therefore timeliness of Service provision is severely hampered.</li> </ul>
<b>Completion of Work</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The NSW HMMS State Council has implemented the Quality Assurance Program for all Major Modifications as these works are exempt from Home Owners Warranty Insurance. No further funding has been received to continue the QA Program and monitor these works.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Client outcomes may potentially be severely compromised due to the absence of the Quality Assurance Program</li> <li><b>Please refer to Page 6 of the Executive Officer's Annual Report for further information</b></li> </ul>