

Abstracts from Paper Session “Equipment, Adaptations and Housing”
COT Annual Conference 10th -13th June 2008

Session no 80.1 Paper

It's true – investing in equipment now saves costly care later!

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Adult Social Care Occupational Therapists know that their assessments and interventions promote and maintain independence, maximise potential and support carers. In 2005 Essex worked in specialisms which created difficulties for joined up working. The contribution OTs make to the provision of care was not quantified or fully understood. Evidence of the cost effectiveness of OT intervention was seen as essential to promote improved joint working and outcomes. A literature search produced no evidence to support the impact of equipment on reduction in care packages

Research was commissioned within Adult Social Care to discover whether and to what extent the provision of equipment brings savings on care packages for older people.

Items of equipment provided to older people were recorded by the OT assessors as well as their assessment of the individual's current care needs if the equipment was not provided. A 'break even' point was calculated where savings on care packages overtook the initial costs of equipment.

The research provided evidence supporting the view that expenditure on equipment has the potential for substantial savings on care packages. These savings would quickly offset initial costs and were far less costly than the longer term expenditure on alternative forms of support. An integrated approach to the provision of care and equipment packages could bring further savings.

This evidence has resulted in improved joined up working practices on high cost care packages and more timely OT interventions which have increased individuals' potential and reduced demand on informal and formal care.

Presenter's CV Pauline Holroyd is Senior Operational Manager for Assessment & Care Management in Essex County Council and also holds the Lead for Occupational Therapy. She has worked in Social Care since the early '70s and is now managing both social work and occupational therapy teams in the South East of the county.

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Session no 80.2 Paper

Identifying a ceiling track hoist supplier

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Essex County Council has in excess of 900 ceiling track hoists in use and provides on average 230 installations a year.

A review identified a wide range of hoists within our stock, making maintenance and breakdown cover complex. An audit requirement for the provision of two quotes from different companies prolonged the time from assessment to successful installation and was a disincentive for suppliers. Cheapest quote was always successful, but was not necessarily best value.

With the principles of 'ensuring Service Improvement' 'strengthening Community Leadership', 'Caring for our Environment' and 'guaranteeing Value for Money' (Essex County Council) foremost in our minds it was identified we could offer a quality service whilst reducing costs.

Working with our procurement department a robust and detailed evaluation process was designed clearly identifying what we expected from a successful contractor, our purchasing service and ourselves.

We wanted savings on new and recycled installations, a streamlined process for our Occupational Therapists and ensure that our existing stock is maintained, inspected and disposed off appropriately.

Working through the process raised ethical issues, clarified our thinking on the kind of company we wanted to work with and ensured we further developed our use of information technology.

This paper will outline the process our small working group used, to combine cost and quality and achieve a service improvement that will lead us into the new service provision requirements for Individual Budgets. The evaluation framework we developed is usable by all public sector organisations.

References Essex County Council: Corporate Plan 2006 - 2009 – strategic objectives

Presenters' CVs Jen Holding is close to retiring after spending 23 years working in health and the last 16 in social care in West Essex

Marjorie Smith is Team Manager in Colchester, a role she has job shared for the last 6 years.

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Session no 80.3 Paper

Worship as an activity of daily living - an inclusive design perspective

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Recent professional debate concerning spirituality has recognised faith and worship as significant in many people's lives (Johnson and Mayers 2005). The 2001 census (ONS 2001) indicates over 77% of the population identify with a religious group and from a participation perspective Tearfund research (Ashworth 2007), looking at Christianity alone, suggests that 7.6 million adults attend church regularly. The significance of worship as an activity of daily living was considered as the starting point for this study which explored the practical accessibility of places of worship as part of an MSc in Access and Inclusive Design at Salford University.

A case study approach was used to explore the accessibility of a church, a mosque and a synagogue, from an inclusive design perspective. Buildings used for worship are subject to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA 1995) and all of those studied had made access adaptations. However there was an emphasis on wheelchair accessibility with limited consideration of the broader and multiple impairment issues for 92% of disabled people (DRC 2006). In addition, disability awareness training was seen as unnecessary.

The process of ethical approval for this study did not anticipate the significance that theological perspectives would have on the site visits and collection of data, which has led to considerable reflection.

The role of the OT as an advisor in the area of inclusive design has been considered and in particular the challenges of addressing the needs of a community of building users, in particular from a multi-cultural and multi-faith perspective.

References Ashworth J (2007), Churchgoing in the UK, Middlesex, Tear fund.

Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (1995), London, HMSO.

Disability Rights Commission (DRC) (2006), Services and Transport, available from www.drc.org.uk/services, cited December 2006.

Johnston D, Mayers C, (2005), Spirituality a review of how Occupational Therapists acknowledge, assess and meet spiritual needs, British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 68(9) pp386-392.

Office of National Statistics (ONS) (2001) 2001 Census [website], available from www.statistics.gov.uk, cited April 2007.

Presenter's CV Pat Eyres is a lecturer on the Occupational Therapy Programmes at the University of Essex - Colchester Institute, and she also practises independently.

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Session no 80.4 Paper

Flexibility for adaptations solutions: successful joint working in a housing options panel

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Enfield has a well-established Housing Options Panel which considers the housing and adaptations options available to

resolve complex situations faced by people with disabilities (ODPM 2004). Senior housing officers, surveyors, occupational therapists and grants officers on the panel bring different perspectives to the discussion. Consent to discuss personal details is obtained and we strive to be fair and consistent across all groups in our diverse community. Sometimes a good solution is difficult to find but we have always tried to be flexible and innovative.

In 2007 the panel discussed and agreed an adaptation that demonstrated the importance of a flexible approach when dealing with complex cases where conventional options were not suitable. As a pilot, a rented prefabricated building (ODPM 2004) was put in to resolve the very urgent needs of a terminally ill man. The speed of installation (ODPM 2004) and very positive outcome for all parties from this flexible approach has positively influenced the addressing of other complex adaptation problems, and the panel has agreed another prefabricated building to be purchased to solve a very different complex situation for a disabled child.

A flexible approach model is important in developing services across different departments in order to consider using resources more flexibly for the best results for all, especially the service user and their family/ carers. It will be taken forward in preparation for the rollout of individual budgets (DOH 2005) which will challenge therapists by taking them out of their comfort zone, so acceptance of risk taking and being flexible will be crucial.

References Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2004), Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People A Good Practice Guide, 1.8, 1.9, 3.9, 7.16, London, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Department of Health (2005), Independence, Well-being and Choice Our vision for the future of social care for adults in England, 4.21, London, DoH.

Presenter's CV Janet McCarthy is Manager of the Housing and Adaptations Team in Enfield's At Home Service, with previous experience as a specialist occupational therapist in housing.

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Session no 80.5 Paper

"I feel so much safer" - unravelling community equipment outcomes

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What does the focus on outcomes mean for community equipment services?

A postal survey (approved by Westminster Social Care Research Steering Group) was carried out among a sample of 483 adults, who, six months earlier had received equipment via community health or social services. Provision was to meet bathing, toileting, domestic, mobility or sensory needs.

The survey aimed to determine the impact of particular categories of equipment in relation to outcomes of safety, independence, need for assistance, quality of life, and choice and control. Secondary aims focused on difficulties experienced with equipment, and satisfaction with key aspects of service delivery.

The response rate was 53%, of whom 74% were aged 65 and over. 91% of respondents felt the equipment had made them feel safer. 87% of respondents identified their quality of life had improved. 22% of respondents were using only some or none of the equipment.

Bathing equipment particularly was either very successful, or not being used. 65% felt 'a lot safer' but by contrast 10% felt their safety was not improved, and 23% reported no impact on their independence.

Practice implications include the potential cost-benefit of targeted follow-up visits, quality of information/demonstration, and the relatively low cost of many equipment packages contrasting with increasingly complex demands on the service.

The presentation will:

describe the methodological complexities of an equipment • outcome survey (eg sample validation, multiple equipment prescription, Helpline requirements)

expand on the findings and their practice implications • within the context of the emerging Transforming Community Equipment Agenda.²

References Department of Health (2006), Our Health, Our Care, Our Say A new direction for community services, London, Department of Health..

Care Services Efficiency Delivery Programme (2006), Community Equipment Services Outline Retail Market Model, available at <http://www.csed.csip.org.uk>.

Presenter's CV Mandy Sainty is Disability Policy Officer, Westminster Adults Services. Her role focuses on service developments within the contracted Occupational Therapy and Community Equipment Services.

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