



# The Better Practice Project

*enhancing independence at home and in the community*

Ageing, Disability and Home Care  
Frequently Asked Questions

February 2010

## **What is *The Better Practice Project*?**

*The Better Practice Project* aims to strengthen the capability of the Home and Community Care (HACC) sector in NSW to adopt better practices that improve client outcomes. For the service provider this may mean “doing with” not “doing for” and for the client this may mean enhanced autonomy and independence at home and in the community.

*The Better Practice Project* has four components:

- 1 a mapping innovation and better practice initiative for HACC in NSW
- 2 an awareness-raising education program for the HACC sector
- 3 regional demonstration projects
- 4 project evaluation

## **Why is Ageing, Disability and Home Care undertaking *The Better Practice Project*?**

Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) wants to identify the better practices already happening across the state, raise awareness about the results being achieved by a person-centred, strengths-based enabling approach, and support regional demonstration projects to inform the future delivery of HACC services in NSW.

*The Better Practice Project* is a priority initiative of the Department. It is aligned with the NSW State Plan which commits ADHC to embedding early intervention and prevention into service delivery and to reducing unnecessary hospital admissions.

The Project is also in line with the NSW HACC Triennial Plan 2008-2011 which commits ADHC to exploring innovative approaches to service delivery.

## **What evidence supports this approach to HACC service delivery?**

There is a growing body of evidence from around Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the US that with appropriate assistance, older people can improve functioning and social connectedness and thereby live more independently at home and in the community.

ADHC’s Northern Region recently funded a research project by Southern Cross University’s Aged Care Learning and Research Centre. The report summarises the experience of teams in the UK, New Zealand and Western Australia. It also identifies the common features of re-ablement programs including the use of assistive technologies, physical therapy, mobility and strengthening exercises, social rehabilitation, and health



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education, including chronic disease self management, continence promotion and nutrition. The research showed that the provision of small amounts of service that give a client the opportunity to regain their capacity to do things for themselves can arrest physical deterioration for a while and improve personal wellbeing.

The *Re-ablement of Older People in North Coast NSW* report by Southern Cross University can be found on the ADHC website. Go to Home and Community Care (HACC) and scroll down to *The Better Practice Project* or access <http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/dadhc/Doing+business+with+us/hacc.htm>.

### **What is happening in other jurisdictions/internationally?**

#### ***Western Australia***

In Western Australia, the Wellness Approach was developed in partnership between the WA HACC Program and the CommunityWest Inc organisation. Many program resources have been developed that could assist others wanting to learn more. See [www.communitywest.com.au](http://www.communitywest.com.au). Silver Chain has been running the Home Independence Program (HIP) for several years. See [www.silverchain.org.au](http://www.silverchain.org.au)

#### ***Victoria***

Victoria commenced the *Well for Life Program* in 2003 targeted at frail older people in aged care settings. The success of this led to the development of the *Active Service Model Project* for HACC clients. Nine pilots were undertaken to assist in the conceptual development of the model. Six have been evaluated to date. The interest from service providers in these led to the HACC National Forum in February 2008, where the various organisations showcased their work on the independence/restorative/re-ablement approach to community care.

The Victorian experience concluded there was no single service model; rather, a range of interventions should be made available within the service system. Further details can be found at [http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hacc/projects/asm\\_project.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/hacc/projects/asm_project.htm)

#### ***New Zealand***

Associate Professor Matthew Parsons from the University of Auckland in New Zealand developed the ASPIRE program for home and community care. For further information see <http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmh/hop-resources-publications-otherpublications>

### **What are the aims of the regional demonstration projects?**

The aim is to pilot a person-centred, strengths-based, enabling approach to HACC service delivery in a number of NSW regions. The demonstration projects will build on the evidence that supports early intervention for selected frail older adults who have the capability of improving functioning in 6-12 weeks. The targeted intervention that is offered may include the provision of services such as assistive technology and home modifications.

The projects will allow us to learn more about how client capability, confidence, functioning and connectedness to their community can be improved as a result of early short-term intervention. Regional demonstration projects will involve clients, carers and families who have a willingness to participate in this new form of service delivery, and will enable us to get their feedback about the new approach.

### **Will the regional demonstration projects be the same?**

Each region involved in supporting a demonstration project is developing an approach tailored to local needs and circumstances. The Department does not assume that any one

approach or any one model is preferable to another. The approach will differ in metropolitan, regional, and rural areas.

### **What is the role of education and training in *The Better Practice Project*?**

*The Better Practice Project* potentially involves a cultural shift from a traditional “doing for” approach to service delivery to a “doing with” enabling model of support. Such a shift in thinking and behaviour requires significant, long-term education and sector support. Education and training will be a fundamental component of each demonstration project. ADHC is allocating resources to support core training for staff involved in the implementation of demonstration projects.

*The Better Practice Project* also includes an awareness-raising education program designed to have people thinking critically about what innovation and better practice in HACC is, and what a person-centred, strengths-based, enabling approach to service delivery really means. The program is scheduled to run across NSW between August and October 2010 and will target a cross-section of the HACC sector. Participants may include service provider managers, case coordinators, HACC Development Officers, regional office personnel, direct care workers, and members of peak bodies. Special educational components of the program may be developed for consumers and carers.

### **How will *The Better Practice Project* be evaluated?**

ADHC has engaged an external evaluation expert to develop, in consultation with the participating regions and service providers, an evaluation framework and strategy for evaluating the regional demonstration projects and the results of other components of *The Better Practice Project*.

Independent evaluation of the results of *The Better Practice Project* has also been built into the overall project.

### **How can I be involved?**

You and your organisation can be involved in *The Better Practice Project* by:

- 1 Keeping abreast of developments which will be broadcast on the service provider portal and posted on the ADHC website:  
<http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/dadhc/Doing+business+with+us/hacc.htm>
- 2 Participating in and encouraging staff to attend the **awareness-raising education program** which will focus on innovation and better practices in HACC in NSW. The program is scheduled to run across NSW between August and October 2010.
- 3 Contributing to industry consultations within your region on improving practice and service delivery.

ADHC has engaged Alt Beatty Consulting to lead a **mapping innovation and better practice** initiative. The idea is to gather information and generate discussion about HACC innovation and better practices that are already achieving results, and produce a practical reference guide to innovation and better practice in HACC in NSW.

Alt Beatty Consulting will be calling for nominations between February and April 2010. **Regions, service providers, and peak bodies are encouraged to respond.** This is a chance to showcase what is happening in NSW.

Once finalised, you will be able to use the reference guide to find out what others are doing, how they are doing it, and apply the learnings to your own particular situation.

To find out more, look for updated Information Sheets on ADHC's service provider portal and website. Go to HACC and scroll down to *The Better Practice Project*: <http://www.dadhc.nsw.gov.au/dadhc/Doing+business+with+us/hacc.htm>

Alt Beatty Consulting contacts:

Dianne Beatty (02) 6775 2257, email [diannebt@ozemail.com.au](mailto:diannebt@ozemail.com.au)

Merilyn Alt (02) 9953 3464, email [malt@bigpond.net.au](mailto:malt@bigpond.net.au)

- 4 Participating in relevant industry forums and sharing your good practice in this area. This includes the NSW IMPACT Forum facilitated by the Aged & Community Services Association of NSW & ACT (ACS) and the NSW Council of Social Services (NCOSS). The IMPACT Forum comprises representatives from service provider organisations, consumer and carer organisations, peak bodies, the HACC Development Officer Network, government departments and local government.

NSW IMPACT Forum contacts:

Ruth Wilson, ACS, (02) 8754-0400, email [ruthw@agedservices.asn.au](mailto:ruthw@agedservices.asn.au)

Christine Regan, NCOSS, (02) 9211-2599, email [chris@ncoss.org.au](mailto:chris@ncoss.org.au)

Website: <http://www.impactnsw.com/index.html>

- 5 Providing feedback to ADHC via peak bodies representing clients, families and carers, as well as service providers.

#### **What is the timeframe for *The Better Practice Project*?**

- 1 The mapping innovation and better practice initiative is occurring from January to June 2010.
- 2 The awareness-raising education program for the sector will be developed in the first half of 2010 and delivered in August to October 2010.
- 3 The regional demonstration projects will commence in May/June 2010 and run until mid-2011.
- 4 Results from the evaluation of *The Better Practice Project* will inform future service delivery.