

SEEC-SESL Health & Social Care Integration Workshop

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Great Hall, King's Building
King's College London, The Strand, London WC2R 2LS



CASE STUDY: Housing Improvement Agencies – Elmbridge BC

The aim of Housing Improvement Agencies (HIAs) is to help older and vulnerable people to repair, maintain or adapt their homes in order to preserve their independence. They work in partnership with local health, housing, social care, fire and police authorities, ensuring that people can continue to live independently in their own homes in comfort, safety, and security. Cost savings can be considerable – the cost of residential care being between £35,000 and £45,000 per year in Surrey.

Care and Repair Elmbridge is a HIA managed by Elmbridge BC and funded by Surrey CC Adult Social Care services, with a role that extends to repair and maintenance services, preventative initiatives, advice and assistance. Their team of 6 handles 130 service enquiries and manages 70 major adaptations a year. There are also links with other local authority services such as telecare and alarms, meals on wheels and transport, so that the service extends beyond the boundaries of the HIA.

Case Study

Mr P (19 years old) has cerebral palsy and lives with his mother (who is his main carer) and his sister. He uses a large powered wheelchair. The property is a detached 2 storey house with garage.

Access to the property was via a semi-permanent ramp at the front door, but the doorway was not wide enough to comfortably allow wheelchair access. Once inside there was a small lobby and narrow doors to the living room and Mr P's small ground floor bedroom and ensuite bathroom. The space was insufficient for him to turn and manoeuvre his wheelchair. Assisting him onto the toilet or into his specialised bath was difficult, creating a risk of injury to his carers.

Intervention

After an initial visit by a Disabled Facilities Grant Officer, the enquiry was passed to the HIA, who recommended converting the garage to create more space, including a larger bedroom and shower room containing a level access shower, and easy access toilet and wash basin. In addition a permanent ramp was built at the front along with wider internal doors and a new wide entrance automatic bedroom door. A hoist and tracking was installed running from the bed to the toilet.

The HIA helped the family to complete the application for a Disabled Facilities Grant, drew up plans and arranged tenders. The total cost of the works was £46,000, leaving a £16,000 shortfall once the grant was approved. The HIA contacted the Social Care Team who obtained approval for top-up funding to cover the full cost. Once underway, the HIA made regular visits to help the family manage the building work.

Outcome

The works enabled Mr P to live at home almost independently, removed lifting and handling issues for his carers and eliminated the need for an external care package.