

Translating accessible housing design policy into virtual reality: An innovative interdisciplinary approach

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Introduction: The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognises people with disability have the right to live in the community as equal citizens. Inclusive housing design is a key enabler to achieving this right. Accessible design is core occupational therapy business, and benefits from an interdisciplinary approach with the resident, their supporters, architects, and technologists.

Objectives:

- 1) Outline the major disability housing reform underway with Australia's new \$22B National Disability Insurance Scheme;
- 2) Detail an approach to translate interdisciplinary housing design evaluation findings, linked to new disability housing policy, into 'virtual housing tours';
- 3) Demonstrate the free, online navigable resource now available.

Approach: Post-occupancy evaluation fieldwork was undertaken across Australia to examine accessible housing design, using both published measures and customised methods. Research industry partnerships were built with state and federal government during the disability reform, and as housing policy was developed. Research findings were coupled with government policy documents and converted into 'virtual reality', building online 'housing tours'. These tours allow the user to navigate through different housing designs and filter application of national design guidelines, new policies and associated rules.

Practice Implications: The use of innovative research and policy translation methods can assist interested stakeholders, including people with disability and their families, occupational therapists, designers and funders, to understand skilled application of government policy in housing practice.

Conclusion: The use of multimedia methods, drawn together through an interdisciplinary lens, has offered greater accessibility and understanding of the application of disability housing policy in contemporary practice.