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Home Independence – The Beginning Of A Different Journey Or Just A Delayed Start?

Abstract

The Home Independence Program (HIP) is a home-based early intervention program specifically directed at optimising functioning, preventing/delaying further functional decline and promoting healthy ageing in individuals referred for, or already receiving, home care services. HIP is the product of a research project funded by the Silver Chain Foundation to develop and test a service model that would assist individuals to maintain or improve their functional independence and thus reduce, or limit, their need for ongoing home care.

Having developed the program, a pilot study was then conducted. The results of this study clearly demonstrated the program's effectiveness in assisting individuals to make functional gains that were then translated into a reduced requirement for home care services.

With the support of the Department of Health our research is now being put into action, and HIP has been operating as a service out of one of our metropolitan bases since October 2001. In addition, the WA Lotteries Commission is funding an evaluation of the program in which the outcomes for 100 individuals receiving HIP are being compared with those of 100 individuals (with similar levels of need) receiving standard home care services.

The conference paper will, having provided a short background to HIP and the current evaluation, report on the outcomes for the first 200 clients to have completed the program as a fully operational service and on some preliminary results from the controlled trial. The outcomes that will be reported will include measures of the individuals' ongoing use of home support services, as well as measures of everyday functioning, morale and the use of other health and community services.

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