

# Supported accommodation with a SmILE

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A worldwide study into best practice accommodation design for people living with an acquired brain or spinal cord injury has been released today.

Speaking at the National Acquired Brain Injury Conference in Melbourne, CEO of the Institute for Safety, Compensation and Recovery Research (ISCRR), Professor Niki Ellis, today announced the study as part of ISCRR's flagship Smart Independent Living Environments (SmILE) initiative.

"This study is the first step in a research project aiming to provide evidence to drive improvement in the design of [dwellings](#) and how support is best offered to people with [acquired brain](#) or spinal cord injury," Professor Ellis.

The study was led by Dean of Monash University's Faculty of Art Design & Architecture (MADA), Professor Shane Murray with the support of ISCRR. Professor Murray is an award-winning architect and academic specialising in research into contemporary housing and urban design issues.

SmILE is a five year research program designed to improve the independence of people with a disability through innovations in accommodation, assistive technology and support services, such as attendant carers.

Two scoping studies have also been completed as part of SmILE,

conducted by Libby Callaway, from Monash University's Department of Occupational Therapy and Professor Amrik Sohal from the Monash Department of Management. The studies confirm the long-held view about the lack of appropriate supported accommodation for people with traumatic brain injury.

The next stage of the studies includes an evaluation of innovative Transport Accident Commission (TAC) housing projects as well as other housing projects in Victoria to create design guidelines for supported accommodation. Together these studies form the backbone of the SmILE program.

"The vision is to develop new models of attendant care that are tailored to individual needs, flexible architecture that can adapt to specific needs over time and the use of technology in smart houses and social networking," Professor Ellis said.

"Traumatic [brain injury](#) and spinal cord injury can be debilitating injuries that have a life-long impact on the injured person, their family and community.

"As well as the direct physical impact, many aspects of daily function are affected such as the ability to take part in social and community activities and to work."

SmILE is a true co-design initiative that gathers together the perspectives and expertise of academics, industry experts, health care professionals, service providers, the TAC and other government agencies, and most most importantly people living with traumatic brain and [spinal cord injury](#).

"The guiding principle of SmILE is working closely with those living with disabilities and to understand their real-world needs and benefit

from their knowledge," Professor Ellis said.

Provided by Monash University

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