

# **A Home for Anthony – A Post Occupancy Evaluation**

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In early 2011, a Midwestern family moved into a new home, one that was designed and built for them following universal design standards. A post occupancy evaluation (POE) was recently undertaken to assess how well the home has met their needs and to identify improvements for future builds. Because the home was built to allow their disabled son to remain at home, details specific to supporting his physical and psychological needs were of particular concern. Research questions queried how construction challenges impacted the success of the project and how the home is influencing the lives of individual family members. Was the original design intent adequately realized? How is this fully equipped home contributing to the family's overall quality of life? Were construction challenges during the original build successfully addressed? Information gathered during the POE will be used to formulate plans for subsequent homes. The evaluation was conducted with the use of interviews, surveys and observations. Collaborative and transdisciplinary input from the child's health care team, his parents, as well as his siblings, grandparents and other caregivers created the base upon which the home was designed and built. This collaborative effort served as the key to the home's design and is reflected upon in the POE. The POE strove to determine how well the original design objectives were met as well as to identify areas for future improvement. Graphic communication of the evaluation results will help ASC conference attendees better understand the impact, success and challenges of specific characteristics of the construction of the home. While the focus of this particular project was supporting a child to allow him to grow up in his own home with his parents and siblings, the same accommodations could be utilized to allow an adult suffered from a debilitating injury or illness to live independently. Incorporating medical equipment such as a ceiling lift system that moves a disabled person from bed to shower or a toilet that supports easy transfer can work equally well in a home for a person of any age suffering from a disability or injury. Lastly, the POE strives to ascertain which features play the most significant role in supporting the quality of life and therefore indicate which need to be a priority for inclusion in subsequent builds. Construction challenges overcome are also evaluated.