



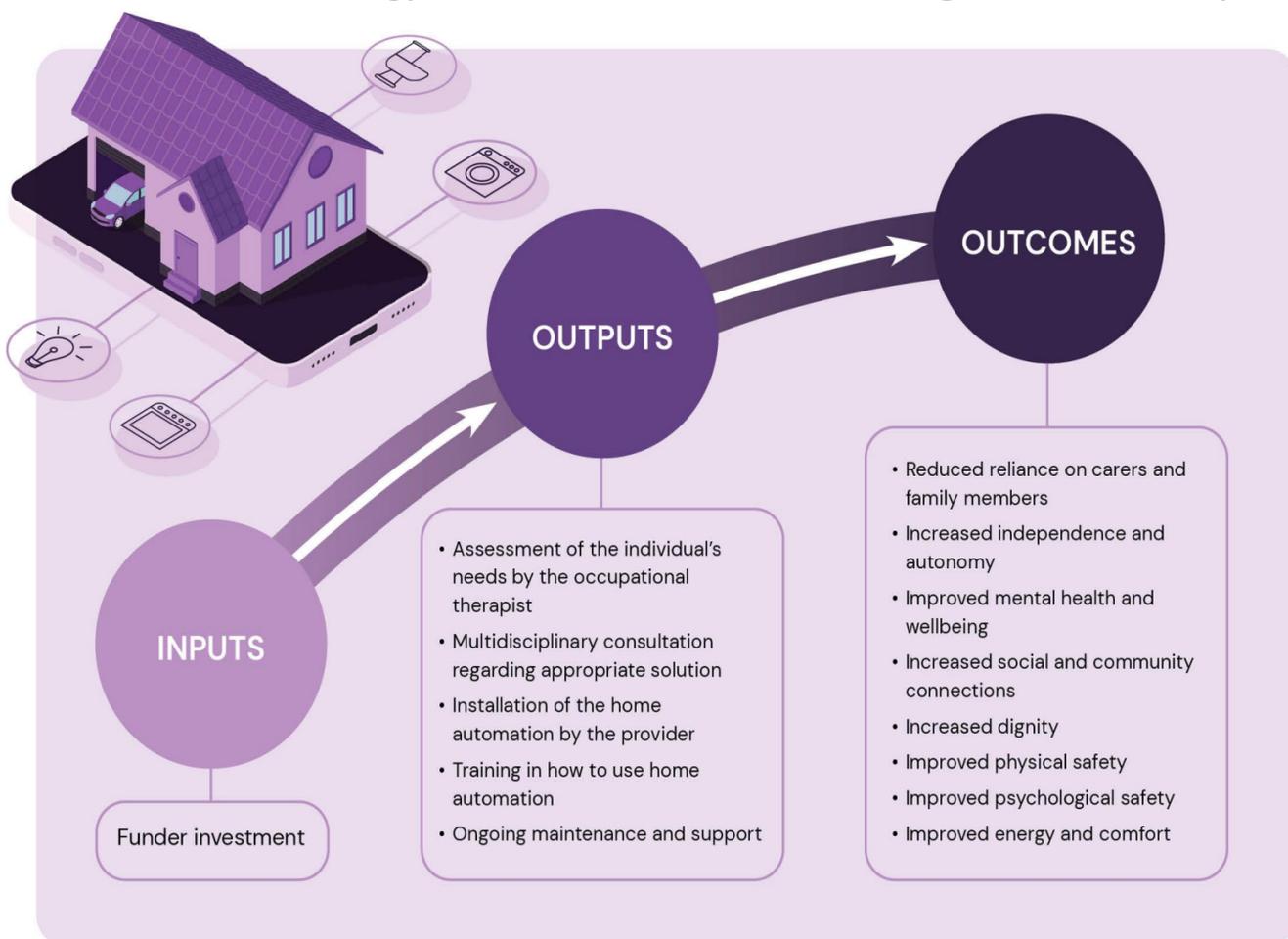
The social return on investment of home automation for people with serious long-term disability

Why is home automation important for people with a disability?

Serious long-term injury (such as injury sustained following a car accident) may impact on one's ability to manage independently within the home. Home automation technology can help to control household functions such as opening and closing doors and blinds, operating heating and cooling, turning on and off lights, answering the door, operating taps and controlling music and televisions. Access to assistive technology is considered to be a human right and necessary to enable equity.

What did this project do?

This research calculated the social return on investment of home automation for people with long term serious injury. This process included six steps: 1) identifying scope and stakeholders, 2) mapping outcomes, 3) evidencing outcomes and giving them value, 4) establishing impact, 5) calculating the social return on investment and 6) reporting findings. We interviewed nine stakeholders and six home automation users and conducted a scoping review (including 11 studies) to understand outcomes which were mapped to a theory of change. Three scenarios were developed with values attached and financial proxies (values obtained through research) were used to estimate the value of the outcomes (that do not have a market traded value).



What did we find?

For our simplest scenario (installation of home automation for heating and cooling, lights, blinds and television operation) we found that for every \$1 invested there was \$38.80 of social value generated. For the most complex scenario (Heating/cooling, lights, blinds, television, automated sliding door, automated front door with intercom and access control, body dryer, automatic shower, automatic taps) there was \$15.10 of social value generated for every \$1 invested. The SROI decreases as the cost of automation increases however, a return of \$15.10 per \$1 investment is still considered a valuable return. The benefit period was calculated as 10 years. Investment remained sound even when parameters changed including reduced financial proxy amount, weightings and length of benefit period.

Scenario	\$ social value generated
Heating/cooling, lights, blinds, television	\$38.80
Heating/cooling, lights, blinds, television, automated sliding door, automated front door with intercom and access control	\$18.34
Heating/cooling, lights, blinds, television, automated sliding door, automated front door with intercom and access control, body dryer, automatic shower, automatic taps	\$15.10

Why does it matter?

People with long-term serious injury may have difficulty obtaining approval for home automation through funding agencies and the process can be challenging involving multiple people, organisations and lengthy delays. While the up-front cost may be considered expensive, the social return is much greater and therefore represents a sound investment for funding agencies.

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