



DDHI HOUSING MODELS REPORT - SUMMARY

All people deserve choice in where and with whom they live. There is clearly no “one size fits all”. Just as housing and support options for seniors have diversified and expanded over the past 50 years, individuals with I/DD also need to be able to access a variety of options to meet their broad spectrum of support needs and diverse lifestyles.

The Developmental Disabilities Housing Initiative (DDHI), a Vermont parent-led coalition, researched options across the country to identify inclusive, sustainable, and replicable housing models for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), including those with high support needs. The full report identified six housing models from across the U.S. as inspiration for Vermont’s plan to develop a variety of models of service-supported peer residences; what follows is a summary report.

What is Service Supportive Housing?

Service-supported housing provides adults with I/DD a stable, affordable home alongside individualized, person-centered supports funded by Medicaid HCBS Waivers. Residents choose how and with whom they live, while supports help them thrive in the community— not just live in it.

Key Criteria for Housing Models:

- **Inclusive** of people with high support needs
- **Compliant** with CMS Settings Rule
- **Sustainable** (reliant on Medicaid, SSI, housing vouchers—not ongoing fundraising)
- Outcome-oriented, promoting **autonomy and community**
- **Replicable and scalable**

Model Summaries

1. Visions for Creative Housing (NH)

- Target: Adults with I/DD, including those needing 24/7 care
- Model: 3-site planned community, 24/7 wraparound supports
- Design: Apartments + communal house; accessible with smart technology
- Funding: HCBS Waivers for services, SSI + Section 8 for housing
- Highlight: Mixed-support levels allow resource sharing; includes communal dining, activities, and individualized autonomy.



2. Cape Cod Village (MA)

- Target: Adults with autism
- Model: Planned community of duplexes; partner provides 24/7 care
- Design: Sensory-sensitive, soundproofing, natural lighting, common areas
- Funding: Medicaid HCBS; room & board from SSI
- Highlight: Strong focus on inclusion and dignity; offers a Community Resource Center open to the broader public.

3. L'Arche Boston North (MA)

- Target: Adults with and without I/DD in intentional community
- Model: Family-style homes in residential neighborhoods
- Design: Shared meals, activities, and care; emphasis on mutual relationships
- Funding: HCBS Waivers; additional support from DDS contracts
- Highlight: Deep relational model fostering inclusion, belonging, and “doing with, not for.”

4. Hope House Foundation (VA)

- Target: Adults with varying support needs in typical apartments
- Model: Fully integrated supported living. Community Support Program increases opportunities for the people they support to take an active role within their communities.
- Design: Scattered-site apartments
- Funding: Medicaid Waivers, fundraising, grants, thrift shop revenue
- Highlights: Housing and services are separated, allowing residents to change providers without losing housing.

5. Vermont Initiative for Deaf Adult Living (VT – proposed)

- Target: Deaf and hard-of-hearing adults with I/DD and other adults with I/DD
- Model: Shared apartment community with Deaf-accessible supports within larger apartment complex
- Design: Connected apartments with private bedrooms, common kitchen & living areas; designed for signing community
- Funding: Medicaid Waivers and/or state budget line; SSI + Section 8
- Highlight: Architecture and staffing designed around communication needs; proposed as a Vermont pilot.

6. Cohousing Vermont (Theoretical Model)

- Target: Mixed community of adults with and without I/DD
- Model: Intentional cohousing with private homes or apartments and shared spaces
- Design: Walkable, accessible, sensory-friendly with communal kitchens and gardens
- Funding: Medicaid HCBS, Section 8, private
- Highlight: Emphasizes interdependence, shared meals/activities, community governance, and full inclusion.
- Cohousing Examples that were in planning stages at the time of the report: Our Home Cathedral Park, Carehaus, Treehouse at Easthampton Meadow



Key Takeaways for Vermont

Core Design and Program Features

- **Housing diversity:** Apartments, townhomes, duplexes, family homes, cohousing, housing clusters
- **Support flexibility:** 24/7 supports, on-call access, shared staffing options, smart technology
- **Community integration:** Access to transit, town centers, vocational/employment supports, arts and recreation
- **Universal design:** Accessibility, safety features, sensory-aware architecture
- **Choice and autonomy:** Leases for residents, personalized spaces, privacy with built-in options for connection

Best Practices for Implementation

- Separate housing from services to ensure resident choice
- Use CMS-compliant supports funded through Medicaid
- Leverage SSI and Section 8 vouchers for stable, low-income housing
- Build housing models around relationships and belonging, not just compliance
- Ensure models can serve people with high needs, including 1:1 and 24/7 staffing

Vermont-Specific Recommendations

- Model like Visions could be replicated to design integrated housing
- Consider L'Arche and other intentional community models for interdependent support models
- Pilot a VIDAL-inspired Deaf-accessible project
- Explore Cohousing as a variety of cohousing models can flexibly combine ownership, rental, and communal values



Contact Information

For questions, please contact Karen Price at karen.price@vtfn.org.

The full DDHI Housing Models Report and other resources can be made available upon request.