

**COALITION FOR WHOLE PERSON SUPPORTS, ADVISORY GROUP - RESPONSES TO
SMOOTHING TRANSITIONS TO CERTIFIED HOUSING WEBINAR PRESENTATION
FEBRUARY 2025**

<p>Question 1: What about the model contributes to better supporting the whole person?</p>	<p>Katie, as the sibling of a 71-year-old man, did a good job especially concerning transition for older IRA residents.</p>
	<p>Building flexibility into certified programs that smoothly adjust supports, funding and approach as the needs of folks change is a much more person centered, individualized and holistic approach compared to the current rigid structure of the program.</p>
<p>Question 2: What are the positive attributes of what was presented?</p>	<p>24-hour IRAs should be solely for individuals needing such support. It should not be for individuals who travel independently and hold complex paid jobs. They should be in supported apartments. This is not the case presently.</p>
	<p>Promotes the concept of aging-in-place. With supports and funding adjusting with the person’s needs, it may have a greater chance of success for those with more complex/changing needs. Aims to increase the focus on “fitting” the services and supports around the individual based on their needs, rather than trying to make an individual “fit” into a more rigid support/program.</p>
<p>Question 3: What could be improved about the ideas presented?</p>	<p>Providers should provide staff IF needed, for job coaching, escorted transportation to jobs, for individuals living in 24-hour IRAs.</p>
	<p>Difficult to implement flexibility in such a heavily regulated state and heavily regulated program.</p>
<p>Question 4: What recommended changes would you suggest to these ideas?</p>	<p>Due to the lack of "love" on the part of most DSP staff, they should get much higher hourly pay, medical coverage and better training as that would translate into more pride/satisfaction in their jobs, which would translate into more emotional support for the residents.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate a technology-first approach into certified supervised IRAs • Incorporate an employment-first approach into certified IRAs and other OPWDD waiver services (the governor’s EO is not enough) • Incorporate an approach that continuously seeks to increase/maximize independence for individuals residing in supervised IRAs. One method to help with this is to ensure guidance/interpretation of supervised IRA regulations allow periods where staff are not physically on-site while the individual is present for situations where the individual(s) can be alone and/or there’s applicable enabling technology is available. • Include an effort to substantially increase the supply of affordable, universally designed housing with open architecture. Whether a person has an enhanced supervision need or is aging and struggling with mobility challenges, open-architecture and

	wheelchair accessible housing allows much greater independence for them.
Question 5: Do you have any other general recommendations?	<p>We need to view, and design supported housing as a wide-ranging continuum of certified and non-certified housing. Supervised IRAs have a place within the continuum, but it should really only be for those who truly need 24/7 staff support or as a temporary living environment where individuals receive intensive independent living education in preparation for them to move into less-restrictive housing. Even in situations where an individual needs long-term 24/7 staff support, the approach should always be on maximizing/building greater independence through habilitation support (when in reality, what's provided in certified settings often ends up primarily or only "custodial care"). An idea to consider in reforming the supportive housing system is to allow residential habilitation to be provided in non-certified homes, whether in an individual's own home or their family's home. Also, this non-certified res hab should be available either through a provider directly or via a self-directed budget. That way, various supports (res hab, com hab, employment, prevoc, day hab, etc.) – along with enabling technology – could be more easily tailored throughout a person's lifetime in a less-regulated home environment that allows greater dignity of risk and individual control over their lives. While community habilitation offers similar services to residential habilitation, it was not really designed for someone who's support needs are beyond a few hours per day or week. To make this work, the state would need to design non-certified residential habilitation to be less regulated than certified settings and the payment structure would need to be sustainable for both the state and providers.</p>