

 **New York Association on Independent Living**


Statewide Housing Education Program

 **Issue**

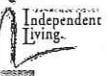
- The lack of accessible, affordable and integrated housing is the primary barrier for people with disabilities and older adults to live in the community
- If people are not provided with housing in the community, they will be unnecessarily forced into costly institutions

 **People Prefer to Live in The Community**


- 2009 3rd quarter report of the Minimum Data Set (MDS) from the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)
- Q1A: Currently, in New York State, there are 22,027 New Yorkers living in nursing facilities who wish to return to the community

 **NYS Association on Independent Living (NYAIL)**


- A statewide membership organization that works to remove barriers to community integration and safeguard the civil rights of people with disabilities

 **Independent Living Centers**


- Cross disability, consumer controlled, community-based NFP organizations that provide services and support to people with disabilities of all ages
- Have broad expertise in the needs of people with disabilities and housing issues, policies and programs
- NYAIL is a membership organization for ILCs that works to remove barriers to full community integration
- Centers are located statewide in nearly every county

 **What is a Home?**


- In a home, a person:
 - Is in complete control of all decisions made in the home
 - Chooses who else resides or visits
 - Is afforded privacy
 - Has full freedom of choice regarding activities while in and out of the home

 **NYAIL Housing Education Initiative**


- Partnership between DOH and the NY Association on Independent Living (NYAIL)
- Promote the availability of affordable, accessible, and integrated housing options for people with disabilities and older adults

 **NYAIL Housing Education Initiative**


- Increase public and stakeholder knowledge of housing-related policies, processes, resources, and opportunities through education, training, technical assistance and the provision of resources
- Foster public/ private partnerships and collaboration between community stakeholders in disability, aging, housing and other areas to increase the availability of housing for people with disabilities


 **NYAIL Housing Education Program Activities**

- Collaboration: facilitate relationships between ILCS, service providers, and other relevant community stakeholders
- Training: deliver programs on topics related to disabilities, aging and housing policies, practices and laws
- Technical assistance: serve as a local resource for people with disabilities, seniors and service providers, and other stakeholders
- Train-the-trainer: provide stakeholders with training materials to educate others about affordable, accessible and integrated housing

 **Activities (cont.)**

- Promote www.nyhousingsearch.gov to people with disabilities, seniors, landlords, and other local housing officials
- Assist community stakeholders with understanding the Consolidated Planning process in various regions of NYS
 - Describes the actions the State will take to implement strategies for affordable housing and community development

 **Affordability**

 **What is Affordable Housing?**

- Usually means "housing that costs resident no more than 30% of their annual income"
- Sometimes used by advocates & others to mean "housing for low-income people"

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Affordability

- Poverty & low income status of people with disabilities and older adults are key barriers to acquiring housing
 - Much higher among people ages 25 – 64 with severe disabilities
 - For many, this is due to being unemployed
 - In comparison, 84% of people in this age group who did not have a disability were employed

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Affordability

- Nationally, a single person or household with one worker would need to earn at least \$14.97 per hour (based on a 40 hour work week, working 50 weeks per year) to be able to afford the average rent for a one bedroom rental unit
 - Wages varies across the country: \$24.15 per hour in Hawaii (high) and \$8.38 in North Dakota (low), which is still above the national minimum wage of \$7.25 and hour

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People with Low Incomes are More Likely to Experience a Disability

- Chronic diseases such as: heart disease, diabetes, cancer, stroke & obesity
 - About 1/4th of people with chronic conditions have one or more daily activity limitations
 - Diabetes continues to be the leading cause of kidney failure, nontraumatic lower-extremity amputations & blindness among adults aged 20-74
 - Environmental factors: poor housing conditions, violence
 - Lack of preventive health services / access to primary care

Sources: CDC & World Health Organization

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Older Adults & Disability

- As we age, we are more likely to become disabled
- Aging population is growing, and is expected to increase
 - The demand for affordable, accessible and integrated housing will also increase

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Who Gets Affordable Housing?

- People with "special needs"
- "Low income" people
- In NYC, "moderate" and "middle income" people

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Who is Left out of Affordable Housing?

- People on SSI, public assistance, SSDI, veterans' disability pensions/ benefits
- Full time minimum wage workers
- Temporary, part-time, seasonal workers
- Homeless people who are not in supportive housing

Many of these people have disabilities

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Where Do They Go?

- The Hidden Homeless
 - Couch surfing
 - Overcrowded housing: risk of eviction, domestic violence
 - Dangerous housing: stairs, bad roommates
 - Isolated housing: no transportation, can't get out of apartment
 - Rent burden: pay >50% of income as rent

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Where Do They Go?

- Institutions
 - Nursing homes, adult homes, hospitals
 - Homeless shelters
 - Prisons
- Supported housing
- Street
- Family

Institutions cost taxpayers a lot of money!

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Accessibility

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Accessibility

- People with disabilities & older adults often cannot find housing that is accessible
- There are few requirements to build apartments and homes that are accessible
 - Requirements that exist have been poorly enforced

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Accessibility


- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: a national law that protects qualified individuals from discrimination based on their disability
 - Rarely heeded by housing authorities and rarely enforced by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- The Fair Housing Amendments Act: passed by congress in 1968 in an effort to impose a comprehensive solution to the problem of unlawful discrimination in housing
 - Has limited impact and enforcement is sparse
 - Many thousands of units that should be accessible are not, due to lack of enforcement

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Accessibility

- New multi-family housing built with federal funds must have 5% of apartments accessible to people with mobility impairments, and 2% affordable to deaf or blind people
- Developers do outreach for disabled tenants to ILCs and other human services organizations who serve low income people


If there are no applicants with disabilities who have high enough income, accessible apartments go to people who do not need them


 **Home Modifications**


- Based on national data, thousands of people with disabilities and older adults need basic home modifications to make their homes more accessible or they will end up in institutions
 - The greatest need is for grab bars or handrails in the bathrooms
 - In addition, many people need: basic features to make homes "visitable", including ramps to access the building or home, elevator or lifts to access unit once in the building, widened doorways and halls & accessible bathrooms on the first floor

 **Housing Stock**


- Existing housing stock in many areas need to be updated & modified
 - Many homes are not accessible and were built with products that may be harmful and need to be removed which can be very expensive (asbestos, lead paint etc.)

 **Integration**




 **Integration**


- People with disabilities and older adults want homes that are integrated into the communities fabric
 - Close to recreation, shopping, public transportation, etc.
- The perception that people with disabilities are considered "sick" and in need of treatment to be cured unfortunately continues in our society
 - Housing options for people with disabilities therefore resemble medical centers rather than what most people call home

 **Integration**


- The vast majority of 811 housing funding currently builds housing that may seem segregated & institutional
 - Allows persons to live as independently as possible in the community with the availability of support services
 - For example: diagnosis-specific projects where only people with a specific type of disability are allowed to live
- Integration should be considered during the construction phase of all single- and multi-family housing developments
 - Accessible units should not be clustered together, but rather dispersed

 **Integration**


- While supportive housing, which is permanent, affordable housing **linked to services** may be a desired component in the spectrum of housing options for some people, more emphasis is needed on increasing funding for fully integrated housing

 **Solutions**


- Long term change must include comprehensive changes in public policy
 - Increase funding for rental housing vouchers
 - Increase incentives for inclusion of housing units for very low income people with disabilities and older adults in federal and State programs that support housing development and construction (e.g. tax credits)
 - Adopt accessibility standards & universal design principles for all home construction by States, counties, and cities, as well as by the building and housing construction industry

 **Conclusion**

- Housing issues are not be for housing agencies only
 - It is important that all NYS agencies collaborate on housing issues in order to reduce fragmentation and produce comprehensive results
- Accessible, affordable, and integrated housing is critical to implementing the State's *Olmstead* obligation

 **Conclusion**

- **The Need for Education**
 - Many people with disabilities and older adults will continue to face dire problems acquiring appropriate housing if housing systems & policies do not change
 - The NYAIL housing education program will increase awareness for the need for affordable, accessible and integrated housing in NYS for people with disabilities of all ages

 **For Additional Information**

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