



Housing and Services Resource Center

HSRC Webinar: Partnerships to Expand Accessible Housing Options with Assistive Technology

November 21, 2024 | 3:00 - 4:00 pm ET

Robert Groenendaal (ACL):

Good afternoon. Today's housing and services resources webinar will focus on partnerships to expand accessible housing options with assistive technology. Next slide. My name is Rob Groenendaal with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Community Living. I serve as the Program Manager at ACL. For the 56 state and territory grantees. Funded under the 21st century assistive technology act. Next slide. Please note that this zoom presentation is being recorded. For audio options, you can use your computer speakers or dial in with the phone number in your Zoom registration email. Participants are muted for the presentation. You are encouraged to actively use chat throughout the presentation. Especially for your comments or to connect with other participants. Please use the Q&A, question and answer, function to ask a presenter a question. You can also send your question or a comment via email to hsrc@acl.hhs.gov. Next slide. The American Sign Language ASL interpreter will be pinned throughout the webinar. You can enlarge the view by pinning the ASL interpreters. To do so, click on the ASL interpreter video icon and select the pin icon. For screen reader users, you can reduce chatter or noise. Use insert spacebar S. to request speech on demand. Next slide. Let's open it up for a brief moment. Today's poll asks. What is the primary sector for your work? You can see that the categories here are Medicaid. Health, Healthcare, non-Medicaid. Housing, homeless, disability and or aging. Human social services not included in the above. Community development. Association, advocacy, philanthropic, education, or research. Consumer or other.

This enough time to respond to the poll? Is now a good time to close the poll?

For this HSRC slide. Please know that the Housing and Services Resource Center is part of an interagency initiative. To streamline and expand access to affordable and accessible housing as well as the essential services that make community living and inclusion possible. Next slide.

Next slide. This should be the results of the poll. Should we...share the results for the poll or get back to those.

The results of the polls should be on your screen now.

Go ahead. Yeah. It looks like our highest representation is from disability and or aging agencies. Yeah, we've got some from housing and homeless and human social services as well. Yeah, yeah, I saw that there was a, almost half or more for the top category. We can move on to the next slide. So for today's agenda. We are dedicating the bulk of the presentation to a partnership in the state of New York. that expanded accessible housing options through the use of assistive technology devices and services followed by questions and answers. Next slide. Just a word about accessibility solutions. Over 23 million households in the United States have accessibility needs to live safely in the community. Home repairs and home modifications including the use of assistive technology are critical tools for people to live independently, and in the homes of their choice. Assistive technology solutions address all kinds of functional needs and enable adaptations to everyday challenges. Next, we will hear from the Accessible Housing and AT Partnership in New York.

Melinda Dolezal (Director, NYS Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities (TRAID)):

Hi, good afternoon or good afternoon wherever you are. My name is Melinda Dolezal. I am the Director of the Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Program, also known as TRAID which is part of the New York State Justice Center. So, our assistive technology program or our AT program is housed within a state agency, but as Rob said, there are actually 56 AT programs within the country. I see some representatives in the in their participant list from, I believe, Florida, Montana, Vermont and Nebraska, among others. So, if after this presentation you're interested in going to learn more about your state AT program, there will be some information there. This particular project was done not just with TRADE. It was an amazing collaboration between the Council on Developmental Disabilities, the Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation and some of the TRADE centers themselves. In New York, we have 12 trade centers that cover every single region from the north country down through Long Island out to the Buffalo region, and of all 12, there was three that participated in this directly participated as well as the Westchester Institute for Human Development who helped to oversee this project, so. Without further ado, because this is a done that took a lot of time and energy and had some amazing outcomes I want to turn this over to Kristin Proud, who is the Executive Director of the New York State Council on Developmental Disabilities, or CDD.

Kristin Proud (Executive Director, NYS Council on Developmental Disabilities):

Thanks, Melinda. Good afternoon, everyone. I want to thank each of you for taking the time out of your busy schedules to join our webinar today, and I hope you find it exciting to hear about this initiative and informative and also inspirational. I think we all know the really transformative role that technology can play in the lives of people with developmental and other disabilities. And so, the New York Council on Developmental Disabilities was very excited to use some of

our federal grant funding to engage with the Westchester Institute for Human Development on a three-year initiative. Which was done as a pilot project. As Melinda said, through partnership with the trade sites. In order to be able to assess individual needs, identify, and then supply appropriate assistive technology and then evaluate those individuals using that assistive technology who are living in non-certified settings. So, today you're going to be hearing more detail from Izel and others at the Westchester Institute about the grant work itself and also, and most importantly about the outcomes which I think you'll find really for some of the participants have been quite transformational. So, with that, I will turn it over to our partner, Carol Napierski from the New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation.

Carol Napierski (Vice President of Program Development & Grant Management, NY Alliance for Inclusion & Innovation):

Oh, thank you, Kristin. As Kristin had mentioned, my name is Carol Napierski and I'm the Vice President of Program Development at New York Alliance for Inclusion and Innovation. New York Alliance, which is what we refer to ourselves as is a statewide association representing about 130 organizations that provide supports and services to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Supports could include residential, employment die program day program just to name a few. We include technology in the natural support, in the education, the development of resources associated with non-certified housing. New York alliance has been razor focused on both the use of technology as a natural support and in the advancement of non-certified housing houses. Non-certified housing options are just homes in the community from apartments, houses, ADUs, which are referred to as accessory dwelling units, and the combination of the supports and services, which is certainly a technology component. So, in 2019, New York alliance was awarded a five-year, statewide and regional housing collaborative grant through the developmental disabilities planning council now known as CDD. The focus of the grant was to create housing opportunities and support from individuals moving from a certified, a group home, to a non-certified. Just a home in the community. So, New York is quite large and quite diverse. From both the housing inventory and the needs. From the rural areas where we may have housing options, but may not necessarily have a lot of public transportation to larger cities like New York City where we have the transformation and we may not have the inventory of affordable housing. Knowing this, it was important for us when we launched the grant to create a housing expert in each of the five regions of the state. I'm going to back up just a little bit. New York Alliance also hosted what we call a robust housing navigation course. 36 hours and it goes through all of the housing a person may have to housing types. At this time in 2019, we had 300 certified housing navigators. We offer the opportunity for people to apply to become what we call a master housing included a regional housing navigator to discuss the houses needs and opportunities. The stakeholders could include individuals, family members, agency staff, developers, builders, state government, land banks just to name a few. in addition to. In addition to the role, they left a home of their own. Started out with the person-centered and looking at the income benefits and helping them to find their home in the community. What we found was a missing piece in the planning process was the community to access technology as a natural support. In meeting with the funders, CDD we spoke about the lack of access to the naturally occurring supports. CDD knowing the value of technology as a natural support partnered with Westchester Institute for human development, which you'll hear in a few more minutes. So it is interesting for today's title of our time together, it is partnerships to expand accessibility and housing options with assistive technology. I want to speak briefly about the partnership. We had mentioned in the opening remarks, certainly CDD was the funder. But beyond funding the -- both the Housing grant that I worked under and also the assistive technology grant, they also connect us with resources in the community and other grantees. We

had the master housing navigator who collaborated and worked with the individuals moving into their new homes and family members. They also had a connection within the region. The independent living centers, Westchester Institute, and certainly the trade center. Which is certainly regional and then it is also statewide. I'm very fortunate to be part of the grant. I'm so looking forward that you are hearing the outcomes. How people use simple, naturally occurring type of technology, to really help them within their new environment. So rather than going through some of the pieces of equipment, I think and there are presentations shortly. You are going to hear about the types of technology that was introduced. I'm going to pass along to the Westchester Institute for human development to speak more about the journey, including the assessment and the equipment. Thank you for this opportunity.

Thank you. Next slide please.

So this grant for us was quite a ways coming. We had partnership with CDD for quite a while around this assistive technology. We were thrilled with this grant finally came about. Because we all knew there were a lot of technology that was hard to get funding for that could make a huge difference in where the people could live as independently as possible and not everybody had to live within the congregate settings. We decided to partner with three trade sites in New York State. We picked it based on the geographic, so we had a good distribution across the State. We had Suffolk County and the center at the technology, we have some co-presenters today from the University of Buffalo Center for assistive tech technology. Next slide please.

So we really wanted to set out what exactly we wanted to accomplish in the three years. That's with most of these things. One can have really grandiose ideas. We fulfilled quite a bit of this. We made difference in the lives of the individuals that made a difference. We wanted to develop an evaluation. We wanted to make sure there was a sound process underneath what technology you choose we all. Know it is the era of technology. People can see and could be the next best thing since cotton candy. We wanted there to be a rigorous process with the involvement of a clinical expert to help make these determinations with the individuals in the housing situation. To use good clinical judgment and to be able to justify why certain technologies would make a difference. I'm hoping that by the end of today, you will have heard enough of the outcomes here to make your own determination on whether we succeeded on that one or not. Can you please give me the slide? So we had a team of people that we wanted with. I managed the program with my partner in crime, Tricia Patrick, and Jeremy was the manager, and Izel was invaluable. You are going to hear from him this afternoon too. We have Erin with us. We also worked with April. I would like to give a shout out to AAIDD. We used and everybody participated in the project. We're through the assessment. It gave us a lot of valuable information to base the planning on. And also to evaluate again at the end. Next slide please.

So, we have 13 participants who actively concluded the participation. We ended up having an additional four people who couldn't make it in to the project, because they couldn't get their housing organized. That's one of the things that we will be talking about. They were -- the Long Island group at the highest numbers of participants. I would like to give a shout out to the housing navigator that we worked with. It is unbelievable housing navigator. And it is definitely been because the biggest struggle that we had with the project was to be able to have people participate in housing. And working with her was definitely a good solution for many of the individuals that we had. They actually currently have six additional people who came back and said can we please do this some more? We're moving into housing soon. They did a really great job of helping people get in to housing. Next slide please. On this slide, I'm just sharing some

demographics. The average age of the participants was in the early 40's. We had more female participants than males by 94. And we had ten Caucasian and African-Americans. One was still in high school and had additional education as well. Currently it is about half and half between employed and unemployed. Next slide please. Next slide please. We skipped over the slide. I'm going to go through barriers and solutions. The biggest problem is it was really challenging for individuals with IDD to cure non-certified housing. And that the partnership with the housing navigators that we mentioned earlier was imperative for helping people do this. It is such a difficult process for individuals with disabilities. Especially individuals with intellectual disabilities. To understand how to work the system, how to get to the housing, what supports are available, and funding and the service really makes a big difference in New York State for the people. So my kudos to the alliance for creating this. Something else that we've had an issue with was that in the places where people lived in apartments or in rented housing, sometimes we got an issue with the landlords who didn't want to give approval for some of the home modifications. What we did for this is we created a later agreement for the trade sites to use in working in some instances. There was no instances where certain things the landlord was just not allowing for us to do. So then the other piece that we really wanted to talk about is to have access to clinical expert AP staff. That's not the easiest thing to find. You are finding someone who can give you that support and who knows about the technology and can really help determine what the best would be. Isn't it the easiest thing to find. There are not a lot of experts in the area who work in the community. Next slide please.

Before we go to that, I think I'm going to seeing as we're talking with individuals who participated, I'm going to ask Erin and Michael to join us. And to share a little bit of the experience with us. Thanks, Tony.

Erin Brunelle, Occupational Therapist at Center for Assistive Technology at University Buffalo (CATUB):

Hello.

Michael May:

Hi.

Erin Brunelle:

I'm Erin from the University of Buffalo Center for Assistive Technology. With me I have another participant, Michael May. I'll just take a few minute -- not even a few minutes. Just a moment to speak as well. I know we would love to hear Mike's perspectives. I think he's ready to give them. One comment about Maria as well. She's -- everyone has been amazing to work with. I think one really interesting thing that came out of her work was her apartment was not set up very well for her. There was a lot of furniture that was not well placed, things that were really causing barriers that were needless in terms of how furniture was arranged. So, it almost felt like we were doing some house makeovers at the same time. We were moving cabinet and things like that around. She doesn't have access to the desk. She is employed. We had desk she had access to. The previous desk was glass top. She had pictures arranged underneath of it loved ones and different events. We found a way to move that into her living room. That became her craft desk. Some interesting adaptations that went on as well that I don't think were expected at the beginning of the project. With me, I have Michael. Michael is the first participant. She's been around now for a couple of years. I'll hand it over to you, if you want to talk about your

experience.

Michael May:

I've been here. It is very enlightening. I love being able to do the simple things, that I wasn't able to do before. I was able to do everything at the capacity. Because I can do anything else. And I also have full access, which gives me access to things I want. And I enjoy doing it, which I wasn't able to do.

Erin Brunelle:

And you've got your Roomba as well. Can you remind me of the name? I'm drawing a blank.

Michael May:

Alfred.

Erin Brunelle:

That's right. It is Alfred like Batman's butler. I feel like Alfred needed a shout out. Were there any specific questions that you felt like would be helpful for us to answer though?

Izel Obermeyer:

Erin, I think they just gave me the feedback of the impact of what we would like to share here. Thank you very much. Thank you very much for joining us today as well.

Michael May:

Thank you.

Izel Obermeyer:

Anything you would like to share with us?

Erin Brunelle:

I think, so you mentioned as well as after the project was closed, there was a couple people who had reached out about still needing the services. I would just echo that we've had the same kind of calls. Whereas it is, you know, the need is very much there. To be able to do this. I'm glad to see this whole conversation going on. Just in terms of potentially being able to pursue these types of grants in the future as well. I think there's a dire need for them. It was great to see the impact that we made. I love to see it continue to grow as well.

Izel Obermeyer:

Thank you, Erin. Thank you, Michael. Thank you to CDD giving us the opportunity to have the grant. It's been an eye opener for all of us on the difference that the technology can make and how empowering that can be. If I can go back to the video that we -- you couldn't hear of -- excuse me, of Brianna's aunt. One of the things at the end, she says is this is allowed Brianna to be able to share so much more of what she wants and what she want needs than she was ever able to. The empowerment is definitely a common theme that we saw during the three years of the grant. I have to share with you guys that this grant came about and it took us a while to get going. Because we really, really struggled to recruit participants who had the housing, so that we can get going. Once we got going, the technology just kept on making a difference. Thank you very much. For that.

Erin Brunelle:

I did see a note that some of what Mike said didn't pick up on the captions. I'll reflect that in the chat. Give me a few moments. Mike and I will type it out too.

Izel Obermeyer:

Thanks, Erin. Can I just ask the person who is organizing the slides is this housingtech.wihd.org active in the slide deck? Can you click on it for me?

Juliana Clifford:

Yes, it is active in the link. If I click on it, it will direct us out of the PowerPoint.

Izel Obermeyer:

Okay. I'm going to then go and talk to you about. I did put some screenshots into slide. Let's work off of those. Go ahead, next slide please. The next thing I want to talk about tonight is if you want to jump in here as you see fit. A lot of this work is work that you did. Tony and I worked together in the beginning when I first asked him if he would work with me on the project. I considered it definitely the king of cognitively accessible technology. Only as an occupational therapist by training. We went through what it was, how we would like this to be and there's a lot of information out there. If you do a Google search on, you know, technology for housing. How do you decide what if this is a good fit or not. Tony really worked with me on developing some specific tools and checklists and document that guide the process of how you look for the equipment that you are looking for, how do we determine if someone when we gave them some smart tools, but the satisfaction with that was. We created a housing evaluation tool kit on our web site, housingtech.wihd.org. We put that out in the public domain. You should be to see it. If you go to the next slide for me, please. Between Tony and Jeremy, our project manager then created this road map as part of the evaluation tool kit. I thought the visual really worked well in helping people navigate how we go about it. For each of these, if you take on each of these boxes on your screen, an image, a PDF document opens up that you can download, that you can use. For example, we have a demographic intake form. The one I would really like to highlight here is in the next slide is there's a how to use the road map. And there's how to, you know, Tony works in accessible technology. The how do is very good for helping someone work through the process. Can you go to the next slide for me? There we see. There's the explanation in the guide. Tony, do you want to give us a brief introduction for that?

Tony Gentry:

It might help if we go back to the previous slide.

Izel Obermeyer:

We like the graphic. Go back to it.

Tony Gentry:

Just briefly if you look at different circles. I'm going to walk from left to right to the circles really quickly. I think the form explains itself. The second piece, the smart home interview, the New York, I call it the shining. It is a guided interview that would be done by the assistive technology professional and person that they are working with to discuss needs in the home. The second piece which is called the home assessive review is a sheet that allows you to walk through the home or roll through the home with a person that you are working with, so they can demonstrate for you what they can and cannot do in their home at this time. Combined with the shiny, you are going end up with a good comprehensive sense around what the needs are around assistive technology. The card is the fourth one. It is a tool that compares what you've learned from the interview and from the walk through. And provides suggestions for assistive

technologies that you may or may not have thought of to address those problems. The last two tools are -- well, the fifth tool is a -- is a form that allows you to list and keep track of the technologies that you are providing and get -- and provide notes for yourself around how they are working and what you might need to use to adopt them. In the final piece is an interview that is done with the client at the end of the intervention where they tell you how satisfied they are with the tools that you provided and give feedback around things that they might prefer otherwise. To my mind, this is a fairly comprehensive soup to nuts, beginning to end, set of tools that can help you provide the provisions that you would need for someone with a developmental disability in the community.

Izel Obermeyer:

Thank you, Tony. Thank you so much for all of the hard welcome that you've put in to this as well.

Tony Gentry:

Thank you.

Izel Obermeyer:

Can we go to the next slide please? The next slide. Can we talk about the next slide please? We talk about assistive technology. We saw you guys had a bunch of questions around the technology that we use and I'm -- what Germany and I can work because each one of the participants have a list of the technology that we recommended for them. We can't put that together. I would be happy to share that. I would like to just caution against just looking at the technology. When we work with individuals with disabilities and technology, using any one of these approaches like the set approach which is the student environment and tools, how do we do and fit this altogether. Making sure that we put the clinical reasoning behind this. So the technology will provide and help them become more independent. And also really tap into the things that the person has strengths in their lives. Then the person-centered approach cannot be stressed enough. When you spoke to Erin and Michael, I think that's something that came across so well for me is you have to work with the individual and believe that they can tell you best what the things are that they struggling with and what the things are they would like to do. And then it is up to the technology expert to say, okay, there are two or three things we can consider here. Let's try to figure out how we can make it work. An example that I can share with you is I work with a young lady. Who needed to get computer access. She was paralyzed from her neck down. She absolutely, 100%, refused to cruise a head mouse. She didn't like the idea of having the dark that the mouse and camera can communicate with. She was willing to work with voice recognition software to do what demands the commands on her screen. She chose which method worked the best. This is what I saw. It is the trade site staff. They worked so closely with the people who participated in the project. To really get a sense of what their needs are. Not what I as the professional think your needs might be. What you as the person in the housing situation identifies as the things you want to do the best. Then we help create the solutions. When he spoke to us about Michael and the fact his parents were terrified about him living alone, that's a very real problem to have. Working with him within the team of his support was as important as to hear from the individual themselves. So coming back to how we approach this, we identified people who were important in the lives of the participants in the project and we identified the expert staff. We brought it altogether, so that for each one of these -- each one of these in my opinion of the 13 participants is a unique case example of person-centered practice on steroids in my opinion. He really made an effort to make that the foundation for this project. I think the outcome speaks for itself when we look at that. On that high note, I'm going to ask if we could look at the questions and see if we can answer those for

you guys. I'm going to open the Q & A. So, we would be happy to share the letter of agreement for the home mods. I'm assuming you are talking about one for a landlord. We would be happy to do that. We'll share with Esther, is that right?

Esther Wright:

That would be fine, yes.

Izel Obermeyer:

Again, I saw that many people ask for the list of technology. We would be happy to put that together. With the caveat that, you know, we'll look at that and see what fits best; right? I mean someone asked -- there's been so many wait lists for housing in many states. How were you able to overcome that barrier? I'm not sure we overcame that barrier to be very frank. I think we tried to work within the system as best as we can. I think part of the difficulty that we had with the grant was the fact that it was -- it was difficult for individuals with disabilities to acquire the housing. I saw Carol on screen just briefly. Do I want to jump in here as well? O

Carol Napierski:

I would love to. Thank you, Izel. As the whole topic is Papes and partnerships and collaboration. We created regional housing collaboratives, bringing people together to make housing happen. Lewis and Neil ever so much -- ever so slightly it moves the needle. Long island, we brought together for the regional housing collaboratives the developer and the provider. We kind of all got together and started talking about how to build in a particular area affordable housing. The housing happened. It is an apartment complex. It is in a beautiful location. If you weren't part of the whole discussion and regional housing collaboratives, it wouldn't have happened. Much like the partnership and collaboration with CDD, Westchester Institute, the trade centers. There's value while coming together. It moves the needle ever so slightly. It certainly moves the needle. Thank you, Izel.

Izel Obermeyer:

You are welcome, Carol. Something that we found is there's an office for people with developmental disabilities, OPWDD. About two-thirds of the grant, there were some questions from people who work at OPWDD about the outcomes of the grant. We've already seen that some things are being reconsidered for funding. Based on the fact that we can -- we could show the difference that it makes in the lives of individuals with disabilities. So I feel as we can try this, each one of us, when you do this, we really need to all work together to get the word out. And when I first made it out, I wasn't 100% sure how it all fitted together. But I truly cannot thank him enough for opening up this agenda. To this big of an audience for us. Because each one of us can now start spreading the word more. And I think that helps a lot. I see -- I saw in the chat that many people who work in the realm of assistive technology also signed in. So I would love for all of us when we work with clients and when we work with participants, and when we work with individuals who struggle to live independently, when we do something and it works well, we share that with whomever we can in the state that will help move the advocacy agenda forward. And then the flip side of that coin, the struggles that you identified. The challenges that you identify is almost more important than the successes that you get. Because those barriers that are put in the way of individuals with disabilities and having access to independent housing is something that we really all need to work together to break down. Doing the advocacy, we have been working with CDD for years around the technology. We saw there was an important agenda. We went after funding to help us make this grant a reality. And make a difference, so that we can showcase. And what I really are appreciated about this is when we first met with Jackie and her team, she said to me we really want to focus on quality here. We don't want to

do 300 people and we don't do a good enough job of each one of those. We want to showcase what can work with individuals with disabilities. We appreciate that that mandate immensely. It really gave us the opportunity to have someone like Tony not only be available as a resource for the trade site staff in the per se, but also be able to go around and meet with the individuals and really get a sense of how did this work? How did it not work? What were the issues? How can we make it better? And those are lessons that were invaluable. There's the list for the devices. Devices and tool names again. I'm just scrolling through the list. I'm sorry. There's the devices. They were the two individuals in wheelchairs. They were two of the ones that you've seen. We've had more people in wheelchairs as well. They were -- Erin, maybe I can tell you here. Were there any particular issues addressed? Because it maybe nice for you to share a little bit about the sensors that you were working with.

Erin Brunelle:

Sorry. Could you repeat that? We had a technical difficulty on her own.

Izel Obermeyer:

Two of the individuals used wheelchairs. Were there any particular issues addressed by it? I thought you might share a little bit about the sensors. I thought that was so cool.

Erin Brunelle:

Certainly. Actually I believe all of our participants were in power chairs. Mike is a power chair user. One of the needs that -- I'll be honest is still kind of in the works. There was some hiccups in it. There's something called the breeze mobility sensors. They are a tool kit of sensors that can be installed around the power chair. If Mike was to back up and his cute cat was behind him and trying to get in to trouble, Mike would get a beep there's an obstacle directly behind it. Right after it was installed, the barriers was we had a broken joy stick. The sensors were not taken off. There are sensors missing. They are funded to be replaced as well. That's something we're getting resolved. It was a really interesting tool kit.

Izel Obermeyer:

Thank you for all of the help.

Erin Brunelle:

We're working on staffing with the wheelchair vendor as well. It is one of those pieces of technology that's very new. We're discovering the hiccups live. Which tends to happen in order to be able to connect with the company that worked with the vendor to hopefully get that resolved.

Izel Obermeyer:

Thanks, Erin.

Erin Brunelle:

No problem.

Izel Obermeyer:

So I'm going to end here. We just give one last -- and the last we talked about security and privacy of the devices. These were handled individually. Depends on the technology that we implemented for the participants. But I would like to say that, you know, we were fortunate that this was grant funded. We didn't have to find justification for the funding. We worked through the evaluation process and based off of the evaluation, we made recommendations for the

technology purchase that was implemented. I would like to wrap this up by saying we didn't share with you guys what a definition of the assistive tech is. But most of you are aware that assistive technology has two parts to it. Technology devices and the services. And I cannot stress more how important these services are. If you give people assistive technology. You can't just give people a bunch of boxes with equipment that is up on the front door and all of the sudden think they are going to be independent. That's not how assistive technology works. If you want someone to use technology effectively, you have to help them set it up. You have to do training on how to utilize it and make sure that the person reaches a certain level of comfort with using their technology. There's no way that we can do any of this, if we don't plan in to it the services and the training that is needed to help an individual with a disability and their circle of support be comfortable with the technology. Something else we spoke about, and that's one of the major reasons why we decided to partner with the trade sites is so that for the sustainability of the individuals we work through these three years with. They have three sites in the area they can go back to where there are technology support available. We don't want to give people the technology and then just leave them. If they have an issue, they need to have resources they can go back to. In some of the questions, I did not have the answers of how we are really going to fund this. We have talked in New York State about self-direction money and how we would do this. The comment about using a life plan as justification is something we could definitely consider self-direction would be part of the solution here. But our focus here was to showcase that it makes an immense difference in the lives of individuals with disabilities, if we can provide the right tools if them to be as independent as they can. And live in the housing situation they choose. If they don't want to live in the congregate setting, there are opportunities that we have showcased here that will help them be able to be as independent as they can. I'm just going to ask is there anyone from my team who would like to share a last thought?

Robert Groenendaal:

While you are thinking about the last thoughts here. If you do, please chime in. Hopefully folks can hear me. We're at the hour. And so what we would like to do is actually, potentially move over to survey slide for folks if they could respond to that. I do want to note while folks are responding to this survey slide that today's slides recording in transcript will be posted on the HSRC web site. The information and additional resources please visit the site that we provided [ACL.gov/housingandservices](https://acl.gov/housingandservices). The housing and services partnership accelerator currently has eight participating states, plus Washington, D.C.

The accelerator supports states and communities to accelerate the development of innovative state strategies to provide housing activities for people with disabilities and older adults at risk or experiencing homelessness. Or the housing and services accelerator grant competition. Applications are due to the administration for community living by 10:00 a.m. eastern time on December 20, 2024. The full application cannot found online on the HSPA web page at <https://acl.gov/housingandservices/accelerator>. Please also direct any questions to HSRC at [ACL.HHS.gov](https://acl.hhs.gov). We're about two minutes over for the presentation. I know there's some additional slides that we have. I think we have the crux of the presentation. I just want to note that please don't hesitate to e-mail us at that address that I just provided. We are interested to learn about your partnerships and innovations. We welcome subscribers to the HSRC list serve. It is over 20,000 and growing. Go to that hub that was mentioned. [ACL.gov/housingandservices](https://acl.gov/housingandservices) web site. So with that, I can't thank the New York team, Izel in particular, as well as your all stars on this project. This is just a fantastic presentation. And for the other presenters, you know, on this, just what a way to spend an afternoon to learn about this project. I'll hand it back over to the facilitator. If there are any other closing remarks.

