# Two Years of Stories and Outcomes





## Office of Developmental Programs
## Intellectual Disability/Autism (ID/A)
## Supportive Housing Pilot

PADDC
PA Developmental Disabilities Council

# WELCOME MESSAGE



Cheryl and David, married 35 years, standing in their kitchen.

Meet Sveta and Hannah, Shane, (on the cover) and Cheryl and David (to the left). They are just five of over 151 individuals who have found their own home through the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) Supportive Housing Pilot. In February 2024, ODP selected 10 counties across PA to create and test a new way to support Pennsylvanians with intellectual and developmental disabilities and autism (IDD/A), to find and have homes of their choice.

Matt and his cat (shown in the picture to the right) also participated in the pilot. This publication includes photographs and stories of just a few who chose to share with you how the ODP Supportive Housing pilot is making a difference in their lives.

More details about the establishment and policies of the pilot are provided at the end of this book. Our priority is to highlight the experiences of those who lived it.



Matt holding his large white cat in his new home.

# OPENING DOORS




Bryan holds up his key to his new apart-ment.

“The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned." ~ Maya Angelou

Do you remember getting the keys to your first apartment or signing your first lease? Can you recall how it felt to be on your own for the first time? PADDC believes that transition from provider-managed homes to people controlling their lives and exercising choice and control is a necessary evolution in the disability service system. In the late 1990's and early 2000's, Council funded efforts on people’s rights and responsibilities with rental and home ownership. We educated private landlords to increase awareness of the incentives available to pursue a broader market of tenants for their properties. Beginning in 2012 through 2023, we funded tests of innovative supports and services that people with disabilities needed to find and keep their chosen homes. These demonstration projects identified barriers and developed recommendations to make person-centered housing possible.  One being to equitably fund people across service system housing options. ODP’s Information Sharing and Advisory Committee’s (ISAC) Housing Subcommittee formulated the design of such a pilot. On December 12, 2023, ISAC adopted the recommendations to implement the pilot. March 1, 2024, that pilot began in 10 counties across Pennsylvania.

Home is more than a place to live. It is also a feeling. Our hope is that everyone, with and without disabilities, experiences that feeling. We partnered with ODP to capture the lived experiences as they unfolded in that journey; to collect qualitative data; and share the voice of those who are served in the ODP Supportive Housing pilot. We are honored to share their stories.

# MEET THE MOVERS...



## Tina

A table here and maybe a plant there.  Tina imagines the possibilities as she tours a potential apartment to rent.

## Vitalii

What's better than your first apartment? Vitalii pauses to commemorate the moment.



## Tim

The cupboards and counters may be bare now, but Tim is loving move-in day in his very own apartment.



## The Oberholtzers

Signing a new lease may have gone electronic, but it is still exciting. The Oberholtzer family signed it together.



## Kyle

Inspecting his new apartment, Kyle gives it a thumbs up.



# ...AND THE SHAKERS

## Roberta & Mitch



Roberta and Mitch share a hug relaxing on their couch.

## Brian



This is such a great day. Brian has many ideas for where to put everything as he moves in to his new home.

## Barry



Barry is loving move-in day. He stopped for a moment in his new kitchen to take it all in.

## Cody and David



How exciting to have your own place. Cody and David fist bump in celebration of their new home together.

## Kelly



Kelly checks out what's happening outside of her new apartment.

# SHANE'S STORY

Shane is taking pride in his new home.  He has learned to cook for himself and clean his home. He also made goals to develop sustainable skills to decrease his supports.



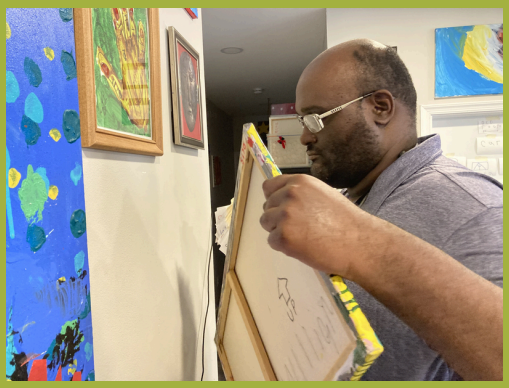


Shane has made great strides with managing his mental health, successfully decreasing his staffing needs. He now makes his mental health a top priority. He likes learning new ways to improve his home, such as painting.

Shane aligns this shift in priorities with valuing the autonomy he now has and his dedication to maintaining his apartment.



# MY LIFE, MY HOME



William says, “I’ve wanted to live outside of my family home since I started working with the PA Disability Partnership and SAU1 in 2009 and saw my coworkers living in their own homes, separate from their families.”

The pilot allowed William to make rent payments affordable. He says, “What I like most about living in my own home is I get to go to sleep and wake up in my own bed, and I choose when I go to bed and wake up. I like living where I do because the apartment is my own. I am the only one who has keys to my apartment.” (except for the one stashed at Mom and Dad’s house.) He stays out late to go to concerts and work. He loves to cook, listen to the radio, go out to eat in his new neighborhood, give disability advocacy trainings, and paint in his home studio.

After moving in, William went to this first art market in April, where he had a booth to sell his paintings.

William wants people to know, “Don’t stop speaking up about what you want for your life.”



# JENNA'S FIRST HOME

Jenna is another example of someone who has successfully benefitted from the supportive housing pilot. Jenna says, "I had reached the point in my life where I was ready to move from my mom's house and live on my own." But there was a barrier to overcome. Jenna explained, "Living on my own in the area was too expensive!" With the support of HTTS and the pilot, Jenna found an apartment and could afford the rent to move into her own place.

Jenna is enjoying having the independence to make her own decisions, work, manage finances, plan and prepare meals, and come and go as she pleases. Jenna says she also invites people over, "I hosted a Christmas party for my church group that was so much fun!"





Jenna shares her apartment with her dog and cat. She is proud to be a contributing member of her community.

Jenna wants people to know, "Had it not been for the supportive housing voucher, I would not be able to afford my own place and live the life that I am now living.

# CHOOSING ROOMMATES

Sometimes home is where your friends are. Hilary, Diana and Theresa live independently in their three-bedroom home that they rent together. Two of these ladies transitioned from living at home with family. One transitioned out of a licensed community home setting.

Housing Specialists worked with the women to organize shared household supplies, developed a rotating chore chart, and facilitated grocery and shopping trips. They scheduled monthly house meetings to ensure continued smooth sailing for these modern-era “Golden Girls.”



But sometimes all matches are not made in heaven. And that’s okay! That is what happened with Sean. After moving in with roommates, Sean advocated for himself when he realized having roommates was not for him. He worked with a Housing Specialist to find an efficiency apartment that fit into his budget and where he felt he could be happier. Since the move, Sean has increased his responsibility and pride in having his own space and maintaining it.

# SAFE AND INDEPENDENT



Alyssa loves her cats and values the joy they bring into her life. She likes her apartment and feels safe there. She knows her neighbors and community.

She enjoys cooking, watching TV, and relaxing. In her community, she likes going to the store and seeing people she knows. She has friends at work and in her neighborhood.

Alyssa says, “My rent went up, and it was hard for me to afford my apartment. I was worried I might have to move. I wanted to stay in my home. The ODP Housing pilot helped me do that.”

Alyssa says, “Now I don’t worry as much about losing my home. I can focus on paying my bills, buying food, and taking care of myself. I feel calmer and more in control.”



Alyssa wants people to know that the ODP Housing pilot helped her stay in her home. She says, “Staying in my apartment is very important to me. It helps me feel safe and independent.”

# HEALTH AND SUPPORT




Annette had her own apartment. But a medical issue began and she couldn't work. Then she got a new landlord and she was facing eviction. She says, "I was scared I might lose my home. I needed help to stay in my apartment. The housing pilot gave me support when I really needed it."

The housing pilot helped her afford to stay where she calls home. Annette says, "It is important to me to have my own space and feel stable." Her health is better and she has a new job. She says, "Now I am better at budgeting and paying my bills on time. The support helped me learn new skills and I feel more confident."





Annette says, "When I had medical issues and could not work, the subsidy increased to help cover my rent. That helped me a lot. I now have a new job and feel proud of myself."

Annette wants people to know, "Keeping my home means everything to me."

# STARTING OVER



Jeff says, “I wanted to be in the pilot because I was tired of living on the streets.” He broke into businesses just to stay warm, which led to prison. He was just trying to survive. He then lived in a group home. He says, “It was dirty and felt dangerous. I wanted something better and safer for myself.”

Jeff worked with his housing support staff to see apartments and meet landlords. He was leading the process to find his home and that meant a lot to him. He now has a place that is clean and quiet. He goes where he wants in his community. He says, “I’m saving money and planning ahead. I couldn’t do that before when I didn’t feel safe or stable.”





Jeff likes being independent. Having a safe, quiet place has changed things for him. He says, “I feel more comfortable and more in control of my life.”

Jeff wants people to know he has been through a lot, but is trying to do better. He says, “The pilot gave me a real chance to feel safe and start over.”

# A BETTER LIFE

Charles joined the pilot for a better life. He says, "I was homeless and staying in a shelter and I didn't want to live like that anymore. I wanted my own place and a chance to do better. The pilot gave me that chance."



Charles likes having a schedule and knowing what he needs to do each day. He likes where he lives because it is quiet and comfortable. He says, "My new home feels good. It's clean, safe, and it's mine. I feel proud of where I live now." He has a new housemate and likes having structure and working together to keep the apartment nice. Charles says, "Before the pilot, I was just trying to get through each day. Now I have a home and a routine."



Charles won an award through the Arc for his housing transition, and St. Luke's recognized him too. Charles says, "That makes me feel proud. Now I'm working toward getting a job, which I couldn't focus on before when I didn't have stable housing."

Charles wants people to know, "I'm proud of how far I've come. Being in the pilot helped me move from a shelter into my own apartment. It helped me grow up and take responsibility."

# BRINGING FAMILY TOGETHER

Michael had been living in respite care with his brother. They couldn't live with their mom who was living in her car. But Michael wanted to be with his mom and brother again. Michael applied to be in the housing pilot. The pilot helped him find a home for him and his family.





Michael joined the pilot at Christmas time and he says, "It was [the] best present. I like that we have a home together. We have beds and furniture. I feel safe. I feel happy being with my family." He likes watching TV, saying hello to neighbors and being friendly, and running errands in his community.

Michael says, "I'm learning about money and how to stay healthy. I'm learning to help with chores and take care of myself. I am also learning how to be a good neighbor."



Michael says, "I want people to know that having a home with my family is very important to me. I am happy we are together. I am working hard to learn new skills and be independent. Having a home helps me feel safe and loved."

# PILOT STRUCTURE

## 01 Prioritization

- People transitioning from ICFs, or who want to transition from licensed or unlicensed residential habilitation settings.
- Individuals in crisis, at risk of losing their housing, living with relatives in emergency category of PUNS, or elderly caregivers.

## 02 Amounts & Calculations

- Based on HUD standard unless the pilot county has a compelling alternative, not to exceed $1,500/month per individual.
- Housing subsidies (including utilities allowable per HUD), move-in costs, security deposits, and utility set-up fees/deposits.

## 03 Support Structure

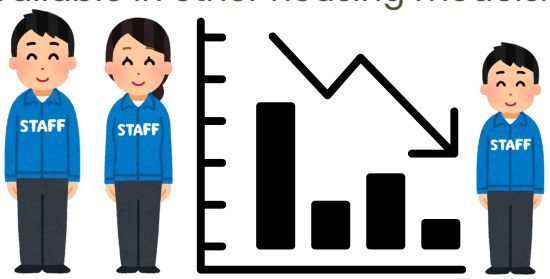
- Housing Transition and Tenancy Sustaining (HTTS), Supported Living services, and/or Supports Coordination housing expertise.
- County mechanism for subsidy payments and a commitment to build capacity for choice of housing supports service providers.

For further details regarding the ODP Supportive Housing pilot, please see “Office of Developmental Programs Intellectual Disability/Autism (ID/A) Supportive Housing Pilot” resource issued February 2024.

# PROVIDER PERSPECTIVES

Supported Living and Housing Transition and Tenancy Sustaining (HTTS) service providers shared examples of how the pilot helps people they serve. These stories show how providers were able to respond quickly to emergency situations; address needs to avoid crisis situations; reduce hours of services; and offer flexibility and choice not typically available in other housing models.

Individuals struggle with roommate relationships, homelessness and unhappy living situations. Through the pilot, the HTTS providers support them to find apartments with others who are a good fit. They express relief and satisfaction with these new, more secure housing arrangements.




Providers' stories included multiple examples of individuals who need fewer hours and reduced staff because of the skills people learned. They show increased responsibility and daily scheduling skills. They keep clean and organized homes. They grocery shop and cook independently. One now uses public transportation to commute to work. They are stable, satisfied in their housing choices. They are truly living their best lives.

With the threat of eviction looming, one individual was determined to stay in her home. HTTS was contacted and quickly coordinated with the Administrative Entity (AE), obtained pilot approval, added HTTS to the ISP , and worked with the landlord - all within five business days. This rapid response prevented eviction and laid the foundation for financial recovery. Since then, she opened her first bank account, paid rent online for the first time, and resolved all outstanding bills. These milestones reflect her growing financial independence and the effectiveness of collaborative housing support.




Individuals are helped to get Section 8 vouchers or other funding and find their new homes. They continue to pay rent and secure jobs, sometimes two jobs. Once funds are stable, they can transition off the pilot and go on to live their lives.

A young man was in a poor living situation with his family. They ended up in a homeless shelter. Because he was over 18, we helped him get his first apartment. This also helped the young man stay in school and keep his job.

# PARTICIPANT OUTCOMES

As a result of participating in the pilot, people are learning new skills, enjoying more independence, showing increased responsibility, gaining independence, achieving goals, and exercising self-determination.

One individual maintained stable housing but was unhappy with her roommate. Despite these difficulties, she spoke up for her needs and sought solutions. She also wanted to be more involved in her community and took steps toward that goal by attending the town fair and walking around her neighborhood. She enjoys the local sights and meeting her neighbors.





An individual has made significant strides in personal responsibility and home management. Previously, he would only request tasks be completed and relied on others to complete them without participating. Recently, he began taking initiative by contacting his landlord directly when issues arise and working collaboratively with his housing specialist to resolve concerns. He also installed blinds he chose and successfully cleaned out his vacuum when it stopped working. He demonstrates a growing sense of ownership and problem-solving in his living space.

An individual enjoys playing video games. Working with staff, they developed a more structured daily routine. They created a visual schedule that includes achievable goals focused on maintaining a healthy lifestyle and a clean-living environment. She engages with this schedule consistently. This shows commitment to personal growth and wellness through daily accomplishments.



With the housing subsidy, individuals are able to live on their own and not have to work full-time to afford an apartment in a desirable area. They can have a satisfying work/life balance which supports their mental health.

An individual, who previously had difficulty maintaining cleanliness and getting along with roommates, has moved into his own apartment. Since the move, he has shown increased responsibility and pride in his living space. He is actively works with HTTS to furnish his home and develop life skills to maintain it.

# PILOT PARTNERS

The Supportive Housing pilot could not be possible without the partnerships and interwoven collaborations of the many entities, professionals, and individuals working to make it a reality in Pennsylvania. This includes landlords, housing management agencies, realtors and many others.

We thank the individuals and their families who took a chance on the pilot. Your willingness to explore, strive and adapt for what you want truly makes this pilot possible.

We thank Deputy Secretary Kristin Ahrens and the Office of Developmental Programs for funding the pilot. We also want to acknowledge the entities who accepted the challenge to create new procedures and policies where there were none. They imagined what could be possible and tested their theories. With their work Pennsylvania is making changes and having successes that individuals and families are experiencing.

Supportive Living and Housing Transition and Tenancy Sustaining (HTTS) service providers:

- Access Services
- Achieva
- Career Rehabilitation Building Services LLC.
- Community Options, Inc.
- Futures Community Support Services, Inc.
- JCHAI - Judith Creed Horizons for Achieving Independence
- JEVS Human Services
- Kiski Valley Opportunities Unlimited
- McGee Aegis Solutions
- Penn-York Opportunities, Inc.
- Person Directed Supports, Inc.
- Shadow Care LLC
- Strawberry Fields, Inc.
- Terrapin House, Inc.
- The Arc of Centre County
- The Arc of Greene County
- Transitional Options, Inc.
- Values Into Action



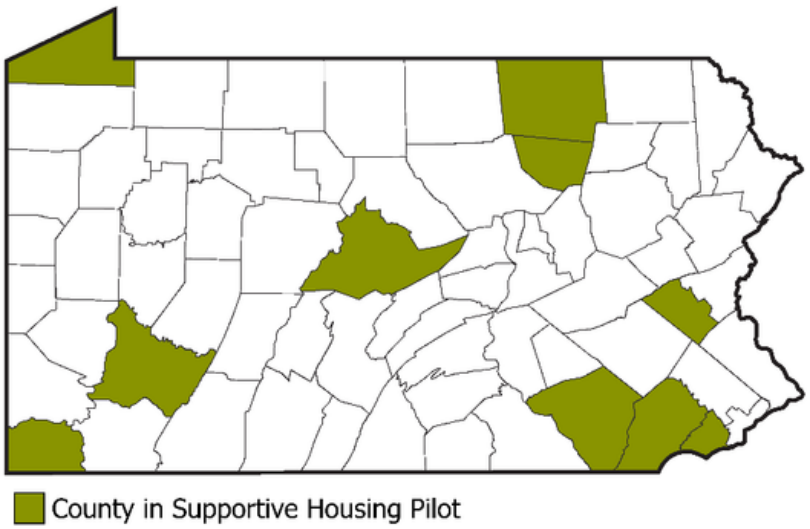
# PILOT PARTNERS

Supports Coordination Organizations:

- A Bridge to Independence
- Achieving More, Inc.
- Bradford/Sullivan Supports Coordination Organization
- Care-Lync Support Coordination Organization
- Center for Community Resources
- Centre County MH/ID/EI-D&A Support Coordination
- Chester County ID Support Coordination
- Cypress Support LLC
- Delaware County Supports Coordination
- ECCM - Expert Community Care Management
- Greene County Human Services Supports Coordination Organization
- Lancaster County BHDS Supports Coordination Organization
- North Star Support Services
- People First Supports Coordination
- Quality Progressions
- SAM, Inc. - Service Access & Management
- The Alliance Advocacy Supports Coordination
- WCSI - Westmoreland Case Management

Administrative Entities:

- Bradford/Sullivan
- Centre
- Chester
- Delaware
- Erie
- Greeme
- Lancaster
- Lehigh
- West Moreland



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

And finally, thank you to our partners who began this multi-decade journey to educate and build the capacity of the community and landlords; advocate for an improved service system; and test and demonstrate new ways for individuals with disabilities to get…home.

- PA Self Determination Housing Project (SDHP), Open Hearth, Inc., Life & Independence for Today (LIFT), Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living (LVCIL), and Transitional Paths to Independent Living (TRPIL);
- Accessible Dreams, Diana T. Myers & Associates, and Housing and Neighborhood Development Services (HANDS);
- PA Health Law Project, Values Into Action, PA Assistive Technology Foundation (PATF), Families CCAN, Carousel Connections, Regional Housing Legal Services (RHLS), and Inglis - Self Determination Housing of Pennsylvania.

PENNSYLVANIA DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES COUNCIL

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