

Supportive Housing for Medically Complex Children and their Families – What is it and could it help Connecticut families?

Why is this needed?

Hundreds of medically complex children are in DCF custody simply because their parents cannot get the resources they need to care for them at home. Many remain in hospitals long after they are ready for discharge, often a year or longer, for the same reasons. Far more families are struggling in their homes, one crisis away from DCF or an indefinite hospital stay.

Families are desperate to find home care nurses to fill the hours they are approved for and accessible housing for families of limited means is extremely limited.

What would it look like?

We interviewed 35 parents of medically complex children to determine if they would be interested in a congregate living arrangement, with on-site access to nursing care, and what it should include. Parents were universally enthusiastic about the idea – many have called back several times for a status report and to learn when they could apply. Nurses were also interviewed to design a supportive working environment able to attract and retain staff.

Both parents and nurses favored a small project, with 8 to 12 families, that fits into its neighborhood in a safe, residential community close to stores and services. Beyond the overwhelming need for nursing care, parents noted needs for care coordination and integrated childcare. An accessible playground available to all children was mentioned often.

Can we afford it?

In fact, we can't afford not to.

Children living in a hospital or in DCF custody for a year can easily cost the state well over \$150,000 (net costs). This supportive housing model is projected to provide direct savings to the state in future years including cost savings from providing consistent care to medically complex children and the benefits to struggling families of stability in care and housing.

We urge your support of the Governor's bonding proposal for supportive housing for families with medically complex children

For a copy of the full feasibility study, call (203-562-1636) or email us at info@cthealthpolicy.org.