



## Full Merger Between Living Well and Hammer & NER Will Discontinue

August 27, 2025

Greetings,

As you know, Hammer & NER and Living Well Disability Services entered into a partnership agreement to explore options for collaboration, including the possibility of merging into one high-capacity organization by January 1, 2026. The vision was to expand support for people served with a continuum of living options, from more independent living to providing specialized care for people who are aging and with higher medical needs.

**After almost a year of planning, the leadership of both Board of Directors has agreed to discontinue the pursuit of a full merger.**

Since we began this process, the environment in which we work has changed dramatically. The climate in which we work is more unstable than ever which makes this not the right time to fully merge two organizations. Changes to State Medical Assistance and Federal Medicaid funding have also complicated planning for both organizations.

Hammer & NER and Living Well Disability Services will continue to collaborate. Leaders have agreed to create a deliberate plan for ongoing partnership, focusing on sharing information, addressing shared challenges, and co-creating solutions that advocate for and support people with disabilities.

As our collaboration continues, we will keep you informed with future communications.

Questions can be directed to me at [Jestrem@Hammer.org](mailto:Jestrem@Hammer.org) or Tom Gillespie at [Tom.Gillespie@livingwell.org](mailto:Tom.Gillespie@livingwell.org).

Blessings,

John Estrem, CEO