Center for Mental Health Implementation Support

CMHIS Needs Assessment Survey Results:
What Support Do Implementers Want?

October 2025

Who We Are *(Background)*

The **Center for Mental Health Implementation Support (CMHIS)** and our five bi-regional Hubs help systems and organizations navigate the complex process of sustainably implementing effective mental health practices.
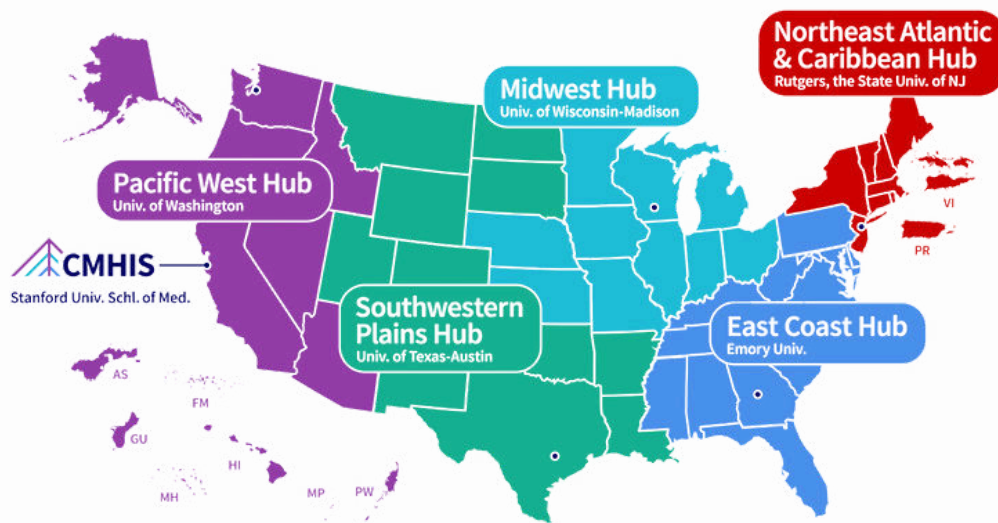
Introduction

People often face barriers to accessing effective care. Mental health leaders, program implementers, and decision makers need support to deliver and sustain the most effective treatments.

CMHIS offers implementation support - free, tailored consultation/coaching, training, and resources focused on how to prepare for, implement, and sustain mental health practices and programs.

Needs Assessment Purpose

We assessed the needs and preferences of staff and leaders implementing mental health practices in state and local agencies, community mental health centers, or related settings. **Our goal was to better understand Implementers' needs and preferences around implementation support and CMHIS's 8 Core Topics.**

CMHIS and Our Bi-Regional Hubs

Pacific West Hub — Univ. of Washington

Midwest Hub — Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison

Northeast Atlantic & Caribbean Hub — Rutgers, the State Univ. of NJ

Southwestern Plains Hub — Univ. of Texas-Austin

East Coast Hub — Emory Univ.

CMHIS — Stanford Univ. Schl. of Med.

What We Did *(Methods & Procedures)*

Recruitment & Dissemination: The anonymous, voluntary online survey was shared broadly (email, LinkedIn, CMHIS website, Hub networks and events).

Eligibility: Participants self-selected if they worked in organizations that oversee or directly provide mental health services and were involved in selecting, adapting, or implementing practices.

Participants: We analyzed responses from 183 respondents.

CMHIS's 8 Core Topics: The Process of Implementing an Effective Program or Practice

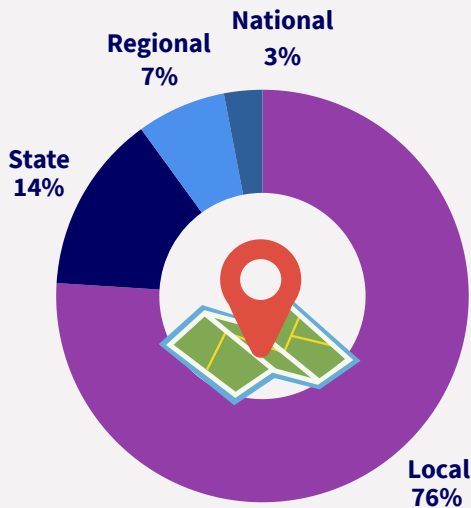| Preparing			Implementing			Sustaining	
Engaging the community and assessing their mental health needs	Identifying factors that influence implementation	Deciding what support is needed to implement the new practice	Using clinical progress to guide treatment	Marketing programs and services	Using data to improve service delivery	Evaluating program outcomes	Sustaining service delivery

Who Participated?

Respondents worked at **community mental health centers** or other mental health programs (36%), **non-profit** or social service organizations (22%), **government agencies** (16%), or **educational settings** (15%).

Most respondents identified as white (65%) and non-Hispanic (85%) and over half of the respondents were front-line staff clinicians (54%).

All 5 bi-regional Hubs were represented in the survey data.
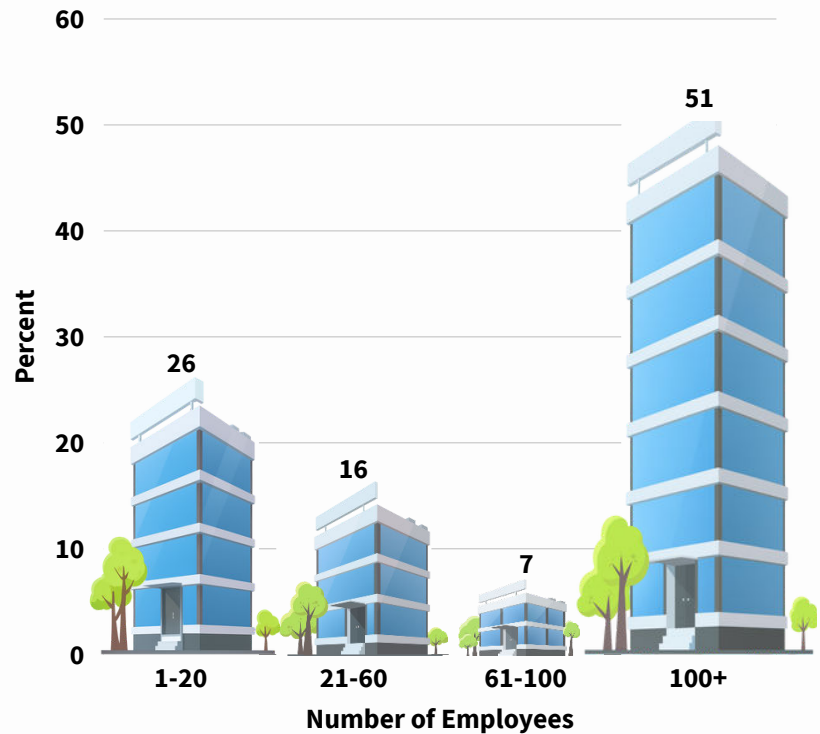
About the Organizations

Geographic Areas Served

National
3%

Regional
7%

State
14%

Local
76%

Respondents' organizations mostly served local areas. They are based in **urban** (48%), **rural** (45%), **suburban** (42%), and **frontier** (9%) locations. *Percentages exceed 100% because organizations could select more than one location type.*
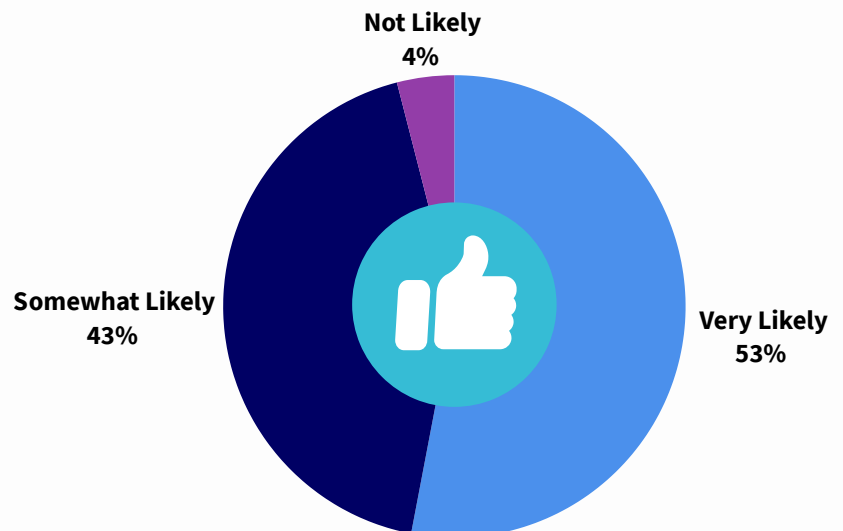
Organization Size

Most respondents work at organizations with over 60 employees (58%).

Percent

1-20	26
21-60	16
61-100	7
100+	51

Number of Employees

Likelihood of participating in support

Almost all respondents (96%) shared that they would be somewhat or very likely to participate in implementation support on CMHIS's 8 Core Topics.

Not Likely
4%
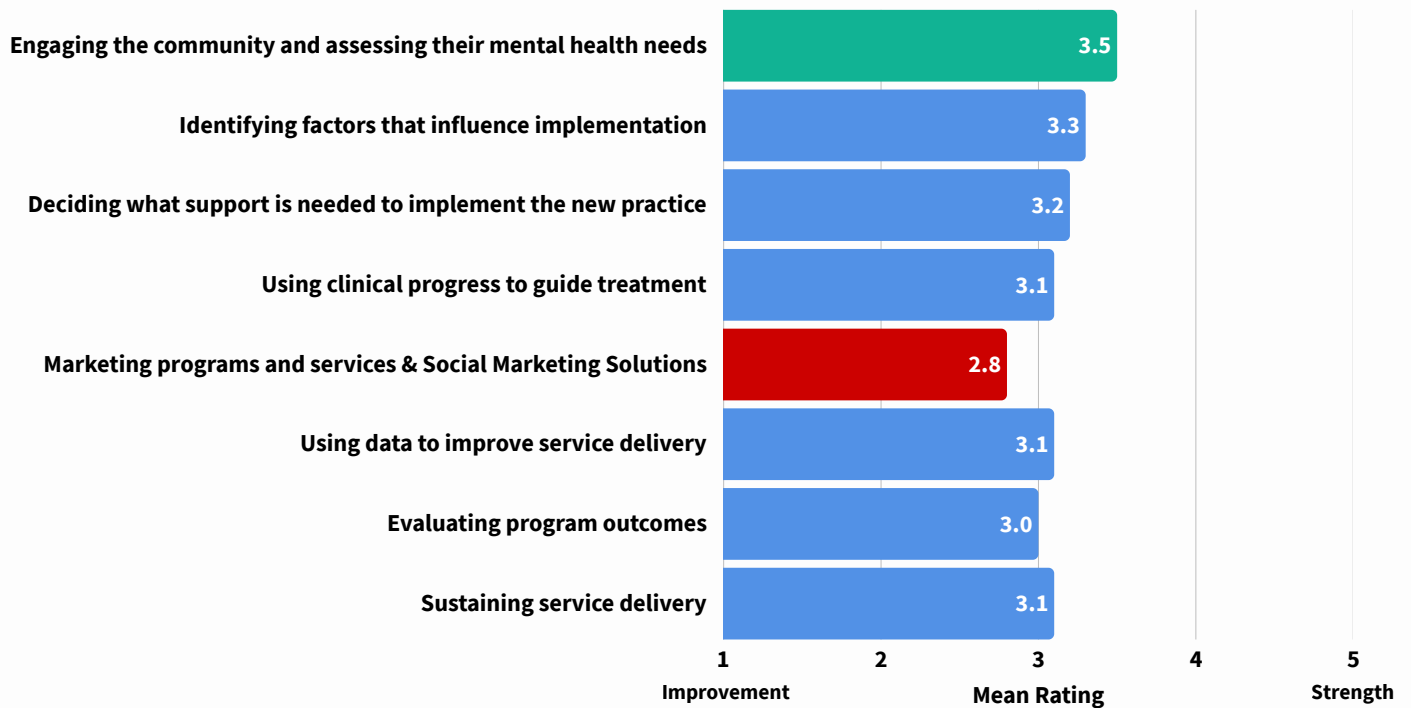
Somewhat Likely
43%

Very Likely
53%

Topics for Implementation Support

In thinking about their organizations' strengths and areas for improvement, respondents rated all 8 Core Topics around a 3, or mid-way between area of improvement or strength. Respondents scored Communications and Social Marketing solutions the lowest **(mean=2.8)** and Community Engagement and Needs Assessment the highest **(mean=3.5)**.

These results suggest there is opportunity to support organizations in making each of the 8 Core Topics into an area of strength.

Perceived Areas of Strength & Improvement

Topic	Mean Rating
Engaging the community and assessing their mental health needs	3.5
Identifying factors that influence implementation	3.3
Deciding what support is needed to implement the new practice	3.2
Using clinical progress to guide treatment	3.1
Marketing programs and services & Social Marketing Solutions	2.8
Using data to improve service delivery	3.1
Evaluating program outcomes	3.0
Sustaining service delivery	3.1

Scale: 1 (Improvement) — 2 — 3 (Mean Rating) — 4 — 5 (Strength)

Examples of what Implementers want to know or do related to the 8 Core Topics

Community Engagement & Needs Assessment: "…it would be useful to know methods and techniques for assessing the needs of beneficiaries in the community and specific intervention methods adapted to their needs."

Measurement-based Care: "Educating staff and all stakeholders on importance of thorough and accurate documentation and data collection (to encourage their compliance and buy-in!)"

Factors Influencing Implementation: "We need to grow our capacity to be able to tailor our offerings more to our specific communities."

Program Evaluation: "Would be helpful to have a template or some guidance on developing an evaluation plan with metrics or measures to help monitor and track progress, which will help communities that we work with make informed decisions."

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Priorities for Implementation Support

Implementers prefer tailored implementation support that meets their organization's needs and provides concrete and actionable strategies.

"Plans developed for urban counties are not a fit for us. For buy-in, we'd need support familiar with Appalachian communities and the restrictions (such as financial and stigma) that would impact the implementation of services. Both have a large role in long-term sustainability."

Implementers want to work with facilitators who are engaging, have experience working in the field, and can support them over time.

"We are more likely to engage in sustained support efforts when there is an ongoing relationship...One-off webinars are helpful, but trusted ongoing relationships are what really help us grow."

What Implementers Value

Implementers value implementation support that is:

- Purposeful
- Tailored
- Co-created
- Interactive
- Accessible

Implementers are motivated to participate in implementation support when there is:

"Flexible scheduling and asynchronous opportunities."

"Ongoing relationship or point-of-contact—a person or team who understands our context, checks in periodically, and can help us troubleshoot implementation challenges over time. One-off webinars are helpful, but trusted ongoing TA relationships are what really help us grow."

Summary

CMHIS's needs assessment survey findings highlight:

1 **Organizations are highly interested in participating in implementation support.**

2 **Support works best when it is purposeful, tailored, interactive, co-created, and accessible.**

3 **Organizations have room for growth in all 8 Core Topics.**

"We are all very interested in implementation science!!!"

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