Center for Mental Health Implementation Support

Implementation Project Profile: CSPNJ Social Marketing Project

How a peer-led New Jersey nonprofit strengthened its social marketing strategy to expand awareness of peer wellness respite services and build support for statewide access.

Background

For more than a decade, Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey (CSPNJ) has provided peer wellness respite services, offering a voluntary, peer-led alternative to psychiatric hospitalization. At three locations across New Jersey, guests receive personalized support in a welcoming environment that promotes wellness, recovery, and community connection.

With an average occupancy rate of 99% during its most recent reporting period, CSPNJ is building on the success of its services with a vision of expanding access statewide. To support this goal, CSPNJ partnered with the Center for Mental Health Implementation Support (CMHIS) to strengthen its outreach, engage new audiences, and increase awareness of peer wellness respite as a valuable community-based resource.

What We Did

Working with the Northeast Atlantic & Caribbean Hub, CSPNJ identified opportunities to build on its existing outreach efforts and expand awareness of peer wellness respite services.

Through regular technical assistance meetings, the CMHIS team helped CSPNJ develop a comprehensive social marketing plan focused on reaching new audiences, tailoring messages, and identifying effective outreach strategies. The collaboration drew on CSPNJ's deep knowledge of its services and communities, complemented by CMHIS expertise in social marketing and implementation.

Chelsea Triano, marketing coordinator at CSPNJ, described the partnership as a collaborative process that encouraged the organization to explore new approaches while building on its existing strengths.

Together, the teams developed practical communications tools, including an elevator pitch, decision tree, program descriptions, and FAQs. These resources equipped CSPNJ staff to engage community members, health care providers, schools, faith-based organizations, and policymakers, strengthening the organization's capacity for sustained outreach.

Triano appreciated the collaborative approach, which encouraged CSPNJ to build on its expertise while exploring new possibilities.

> **"They really offered a self-driven approach, where we were able to be collaborative as we always are, but in a new way."** — Chelsea Triano, CSPNJ

Insights & Turning Points

Building on existing strengths to reach new audiences. Through collaborative planning, CSPNJ identified opportunities to extend its established community relationships and connect with additional audiences. Triano described the process as an opportunity to consider "what audiences were we not reaching, and who do we have strengthened relationships with," and how CSPNJ could "optimize those current relationships to reach the outer circles."

Turning communications strategies into practical tools. The decision tree became a particularly valuable resource, helping staff guide conversations toward services relevant to each person's location and needs. For Triano, the tool also offered a way to help colleagues confidently represent CSPNJ at community events.

Finding new ways to apply existing expertise. The social marketing process helped CSPNJ recognize opportunities to adapt messages and tools across multiple audiences, making its outreach strategy both comprehensive and practical.

> **"[The decision tree] helped empower team members to feel prepared and equipped when going out into the community."** — Chelsea Triano, CSPNJ

Developed by the Center for Mental Health Implementation Support, Northeast Atlantic & Caribbean Hub, 2026.

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Core Topics Featured

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

Impact & What Endured

The partnership equipped CSPNJ with a comprehensive social marketing plan and practical communications resources that staff are incorporating into outreach activities. The decision tree and elevator pitch are helping employees across departments communicate more consistently about peer wellness respite services and connect community members with relevant information.

Triano also described growing engagement among colleagues throughout the organization. One employee who had not previously worked directly with respite services helped initiate a potential grant opportunity to support expansion, an example of how broader staff awareness can inspire new opportunities.

CSPNJ has also identified regional staff champions to help extend outreach efforts and is building on this foundation through plans for continued training, monitoring, and quality improvement.

The collaboration helped CSPNJ translate that knowledge into an approach for reaching more people and advancing its vision of expanded access to peer wellness respite services.

Lessons From the Field

Build on existing expertise. Organizations bring valuable knowledge of their services and communities. Collaborative implementation support can help translate that expertise into new outreach opportunities.

Engage staff across the organization. Equipping employees with shared communications tools can strengthen organizational awareness, encourage collaboration and create new opportunities for growth.

Make strategies practical and adaptable. Tools such as decision trees, elevator pitches and audience-specific messaging can help staff engage diverse communities with confidence.

Create a foundation for sustainment. Identifying staff champions and integrating outreach into ongoing organizational practices can help sustain progress beyond the initial partnership.

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Questions? Want to request support? Contact us! neatlcaribbean@cmhisupport.org

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