



## Integrated Community Project (ICP) Summary

6/20/22

The goal of the Integrated Community Project (ICP) is to increase the capacity of people with disabilities to become completely engaged in their communities. In order to do this, we initially worked in three selected counties, Bergen, Camden, and Ocean, assessing communities' current successes and opportunities to grow their community integration, involvement and engagement. We expect the project to impact a combined 300,000 individuals who live with disabilities such as physical, intellectual and developmental, mental health and substance abuse disabilities and who experience homelessness and/or who are aging.

Over the summer of 2021, forty-four people with lived experience participated in focus groups in our three selected counties. Through the focus groups, we learned how community integration is working and where there is room to improve community involvement. After the focus groups, we invited participants with lived experience to join the Integrated Community Project (ICP) Leadership Teams in our three selected counties.

SHA has worked with our two project partners, the New Jersey Coalition to End Homelessness (NJCEH) and the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities (NJCDD), and organizational leaders and leaders with lived experience to develop an ICP Self-Assessment for municipalities. People with a full range of disabilities lead the work towards equity and reducing the stereotypes that people with lived experience often face day-to-day, decreasing prejudice against and stigma affecting the population and providing leadership opportunities to people living with disabilities.

The leadership teams advised us in the selection of the initial 3 municipalities in each county to ask to participate in the Self-Assessments that we have completed to date. What we learned from leaders and through the interactive Self-Assessment meetings with cities and towns guided the content of and resources included in the ICP Toolkit for Municipalities.

We are defining community integration, involvement and engagement and exemplifying where community involvement works. With leadership from individuals with disabilities and those who work to support them, communities can continue to make decisions to move toward full inclusiveness and understanding of the potential of people of all abilities. We are working towards a future in which people with lived experience with disabilities and barriers will be employed in meaningful work, access community facilities, and live in affordable and supportive housing. Individuals will vote, inform policymakers, make recommendations and advocate to local officials, elected officials at all other levels about their needs and hold elected office themselves.



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