



SHA-NJ Releases New Integrated Community Project Initiative - A Toolkit For Municipalities

ICP Toolkit Assessment Will Empower NJ To Enhance Community Inclusion For Individuals With Disabilities/Barriers

SOUTH ORANGE, NJ: Today, the [Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey \(SHA\)](#) releases its Integrated Community Project (ICP) Toolkit For Municipalities. This new resource is designed to help local communities to increase their community involvement for individuals with physical, intellectual, and developmental disabilities, mental illness, in substance abuse recovery, who are aging, and/or who have experienced homelessness. SHA has compiled a comprehensive set of resources, best practices, and strategies for municipalities and community leaders to better engage people with disabilities and barriers in every aspect of community life. The Toolkit for Municipalities is a digital resource.

According to the World Health Organization, over 1 billion people live with some form of disability. In New Jersey, one in four adults (23%) live with a disability. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected individuals with disabilities, with disrupted access to supports and limited social interaction due to isolation. Now, community leaders have a renewed opportunity to strengthen their communities to support inclusivity and expand involvement.

The Toolkit For Municipalities was a product of the ICP and developed with [the expertise of individuals with lived experience](#) who guided the decisions around its content. [The Integrated Community Project \(ICP\)](#) has the goal of increasing capacity of people with disabilities and barriers to become fully engaged in their communities. SHA works towards a future in which people with lived experience with disabilities and barriers will have access to community facilities and live in affordable and supportive housing. Working with municipalities, they can lead the effort and help municipal staff and elected officials use the Toolkit to make changes. SHA has also developed an Integrated Community Project Self-Assessment for Municipalities which can be used with the Toolkit.

"SHA is so very proud to release our Toolkit for Municipalities," said Diane Riley, Executive Director, Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey. "We know that the resources available will help broaden the conversation around inclusion while at the same time, give our city and town leaders the tools that will help them involve more people with a variety of barriers in the life of their communities. While the Toolkit is the end result of this 18-month journey in development, this is just the beginning of the changes that it will help achieve."

This project was funded by an [Inclusive Healthy Communities Grant](#) from the Division of Disability Services, New Jersey Department of Human Services, an initiative designed to promote inclusive practices that support the health and well-being of individuals with disabilities in the communities where they live. Over the past 18 months, SHA developed this Toolkit in partnership with the [New Jersey Coalition to End Homelessness \(NJCEH\)](#) and the [New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities \(NJCDD\)](#). SHA aims to impact 300,000 individuals by providing tools and resources to transform and assist communities in fully engaging individuals with disabilities.

For more information about the ICP Toolkit for Municipalities and the ICP project, contact Kate Kelly, Integrated Community Project Manager, at kate.kelly@shanj.org or visit www.shanj.org.

About The Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey: [The Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey](#) unites its diverse coalition of members engaging development, resources, and information to sustain supportive housing systems within New Jersey. Since 1998, our statewide mission seeks to enhance lives and accessibility to enable independent living within our communities.

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