



Collaborative Support Programs of NJ
www.cspnj.org

A statewide behavioral health agency incorporated in 1984, CSPNJ has established itself as a respected innovator of housing, Community Wellness Centers, employment, and economic development services that promote the wellness and recovery of people with the lived experience of behavioral health conditions. Starting with just three drop-in centers to what is now a statewide network of programs, CSPNJ is a nationally recognized leader in the design and delivery of wellness and recovery-oriented services, offering opportunities for people to live, learn, and work in the community of their choice. Our motto is: “Our greatest resource is the life experiences of persons working through their own recovery.” This continues to be a core component of the agency’s mission, vision, and values.

Throughout our history, we have created services in response to the people we support who also have extremely low incomes. Initially, we attempted to address isolation and transcend the “patient role” by developing and operating peer-led drop-in centers as well as creating a statewide advocacy initiative. We organized statewide educational forums and participated in the national Alternatives Conference to network and learn about other innovative, recovery-fostering alternatives from peers throughout the country. Through active participation in these educational forums, we designed an innovative housing and support model that addresses the poverty and inadequate living conditions that impede recovery and well-being. By 1989 we opened the first peer-run house in Asbury Park. We now provide safe and decent affordable housing for more than 750 persons in New Jersey at over 30 locations. We also provide wellness centers, wellness respites, and other wellness-focused innovations.

Mission Statement

Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey, Inc. (CSPNJ), a peer-led not-for-profit organization, provides flexible, community-based services that promote responsibility, recovery, and wellness through the provision of community wellness centers, supportive and respite housing, human rights advocacy, educational and innovative programs for people with the lived experience of behavioral health conditions and substance use.

Financial Services

In 2002, CSP broadened its mission to address the issues of poverty and resulting disempowerment faced by many very low-income persons, especially those with mental health conditions. The Financial Services offered by CSP are designed to provide opportunities to people with mental health conditions so they can live successfully in the community; have the chance to connect, grow, and reach self-sufficiency. There are a few different programs that they offer in Financial services:

- *Financial Management Accounts*, which provide support in budgeting and payment of bills, increasing tenancy, housing stability, and savings.
- *Match Savings Programs*, including Savings Club Accounts

- offering individuals a 1:1 match for one year up to \$1000. Can be used for security deposit and to purchase a vehicle only.
- 6 months savings program – offering individuals a 50% match. Can be used for items such as car repairs, furniture, new TV, computer, etc. Can't be used for rent, food, utility bills, etc

•*Credit Counseling*, a free-of-charge service provided to people using CSP Financial Service who need assistance with building credit, reducing or eliminating debt, and/or improving credit scores. Participants work with a Financial Service staff member to evaluate all aspects of their credit and to work on a plan to achieve financial stability.

•*Financial Literacy Education*, to help improve budgeting and money management skills in the areas of the basics of money, banking, smart shopping, building and repairing credit, asset specific education, and training to avoid predatory financial institution practices, using a curriculum that will engage and change people's attitudes and their relationship with money.

This service is provided to individuals that are admitted to CSP Supportive Services or are a member of a CSPNJ Community Wellness Centers.

Peer Wellness Respite

Peer wellness respite is a safe alternative to an inpatient psychiatric hospitalization. As a peer-run initiative, Respite staff provide 24/7 peer to peer support in working through a behavioral health crisis. The CSPNJ Respite Program offers a clean, safe, supportive, tranquil, and non-judgmental environment in a residential community. Guests can be provided support at the house for a maximum of 10 days and offered follow up support for up to 30 days. We offer intensive peer support and involvement in wellness activities on site and through follow up support to help guests to restore balance, and plan for adjustments to their home, their associated valued roles, and their community activities. Our Peer Wellness Respite service is staffed 24 hours a day, 7

days a week individuals with lived experience who are trained and experienced in supporting others to transform a crisis into an opportunity for enhancing personal wellness. We aim to both inspire hope and assist guests in developing crisis self-management skills so that our guests can better manage the current and any future crisis situations. We focus on self-care in the areas of sleep and rest, relaxation, nutrition, physical activity, and management of co-occurring medical or substance use challenges. We have three Respite houses, and they are located in Passaic County, Middlesex County, and Essex County. Even though they are located more in North Jersey, anyone that lives in NJ can be referred to the program.

Eligibility Criteria:

- Must live in New Jersey
- 18 years of age or older
- Experiencing a crisis or emotional distress
- Identify as living with a mental or substance use disorder

Community Wellness Centers

What is a Community Wellness Center?

CSPNJ's Community Wellness Centers are designed to empower people in recovery to realize a lifestyle centered on wellness. The Center's focus on the 8 dimensions of Wellness, which are social, spiritual, financial, occupational, environmental, mental, emotional, and physical health. The mission of our Community Wellness Centers is to create a warm welcoming place where people can gain skills and

motivation to set and achieve the personal wellness goals necessary for recovery. We offer opportunities to access education, support, and resources to help people in recovery realize a lifestyle centered on comprehensive wellness.

Community Wellness Centers:

- Create a place where you can feel respected and accepted
- Provide stepping stones to personal growth
- Help individuals learn to access resources and tools available in their community
- Introduce you to the support from other people who have similar life experiences
- Counteract loneliness and isolation

What can you expect at the Wellness Center?

- Peer support
- Innovative groups
- Linkage to community advocacy
- A welcoming atmosphere emphasizing acceptance of the wide diversity of experience and culture that members bring

What happens at Community Wellness Centers?

- Access to Best Practice Peer Resources
- Wellness and recovery education, groups and training opportunities
- Leadership Training
- Cultural sensitivity and diversity training
- Opportunities to attend Community and Social events
- Linkage to consumer advocacy groups [Coalition of Mental Health Consumer Organizations (COMHCO), State Consumer Advisory Committee (SCAC), Consumer Advocacy Partnership, County Mental Health Boards and others]
- Peer Employment support groups (help you plan to return to school and/or work)
- Special projects and community engagement

-Certified Peer Recovery Specialist – are individuals with lived experience who have been successful in the recovery process who support others experiencing similar situations. They provide non-clinical, strength-based assistance to support long-term recovery from substance use disorders. Certified Peer Recovery Specialists help individuals to initiate and stay engaged in the recovery process and reduce the likelihood of a return to substance use.

Permanent Supportive Housing - CEC

CSPNJ's permanent supportive housing is an intervention that combines affordable housing assistance with voluntary support services to address the needs of chronically homeless people. The services are designed to build independent living and tenancy skills and connect people with community-based health care, treatment and employment services.

Community Enterprises Corporation (CEC) manages CSPNJ's permanent supportive services across the state of New Jersey for adults with special needs. CEC is a community and economic development organization, creating housing and economic opportunities for low-income people living with mental illness and other special needs.

There are many types and models for developing and operating supportive services, which include a range of partnerships between housing development, property management and social service providers. The key elements of supportive services endorsed by Community Enterprise Corporation, a subsidiary of

CSPNJ, are that it is lease-based housing with supportive services provided to tenants with special needs in the convenience of their own home. Residents of the homes are provided with supportive services from the CSPNJ team or another service provider.

CEC is a HUD-approved Public Housing Agency (PHA880) and is experienced in developing, operating and providing subsidized affordable housing opportunities that are funded by federal and state rental assistance programs.

To be eligible for the supportive housing program, individuals must:

- be over 18 years of age
- be considered low-income
- be a present and/or past recipient of mental health services

Supportive Services

Supportive Services/Community Support Services (CSS) offers rehabilitation services and supports that enable individuals to achieve and continue to actively participate in the community in the home of their choice. Supportive Services allow for individuals to live in an environment with support from staff to promote independence and healthy lifestyles. The individual works together with Supportive Services to meet goals. These services are person centered, strengths based, recovery oriented, and focus on such things as skills training and using natural and peer supports. Services are provided both on-site and off-site, with 24-hour, 7 day a week staff on call. A lot of times, the services are provided right in the individual's home.