

SURVEY SUMMARY

Community Social Integration (CSI) has strengths in many areas.

- CSI is spearheaded by perseverant, passionate, and determined owners who have placed their personal and professional resources and qualifications as the foundation of the organization. Their philosophy of supporting customers through friendship and mutual understanding shines through their voices and actions.
- CSI is congratulated for its commitment to serving persons with developmental disabilities who, along with facing mental health diagnoses and other life choice challenges, encompass a niche population that other organizations in its service area find difficult to support.
- An entrepreneurial focus is evident, and a willingness to expand with ideas outside the organization's known comfort zone is embraced. Leadership works diligently to maintain and improve the current services, even while dealing with funding cuts and other economic barriers.
- An in-depth strategic plan discusses the breadth of efforts the organization is taking to ensure its future and to expand to better serve those in its niche population within its geographic area. A clear vision is in evidence.
- CSI appears committed to quality improvement, as exemplified by its open and appreciative attitude toward the survey and its efforts to fully implement the CARF standards and processes. It embraced the consultation offered during the survey and appeared to consider suggestions with an open mind.
- The administrative/managerial personnel in place create an open teamwork of professionals whose combined efforts are clearly focused on the customers. The evidenced qualifications and strengths ensure that the direct support personnel have the support they need to be the best caregivers possible.
- Employment enhancements include shift differentials for taking on additional training and responsibilities, the opportunity to cash out accrued personal time, and annual bonus incentives.
- A commitment to surround customers with staff members who meet their desired cultural and unique disability needs is apparent.
- CSI is commended for supporting customers who have complex needs, many of whom have experienced quite a bit of hardship and challenge in their lives. The organization has embraced them with open arms and has shown them a tremendous amount of dignity, respect, and love. This, in addition to providing them with program planning that meets their needs, has been a recipe for success.
- Funders report a high level of satisfaction and comfort with the services and supports provided by CSL. They are considered the go-to organization for supporting persons with complex needs, including those with criminal involvement, substance abuse, and other unique challenges. Funders state that CSI has "come a long way," and it is relied on by Connecticut Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to support many of its harder to support persons served.
- Customers receiving services reported a high degree of satisfaction and mutual respect and admiration for employees throughout the organization, including the executive director and residential director. Customers reported that they can easily relate to many of the direct support

professionals, managers, and others throughout the organization. These highly personal relationships have proven to go a long way in encouraging growth and opportunities for the customers.

- Many of the customers shared their dreams and aspirations to move into their own apartments, obtain steady and reliable employment, finish school and obtain their GED, obtain their driver's license, etc. It was refreshing to observe this level of understanding and appreciation for having goals and to recognize that the direct support professionals are supportive of these goals, wherever appropriate. The individualized plans of the customers reflected these desires and contained action steps that supported progress toward them.
- Family members of customers served expressed a high level of satisfaction with the services provided by the organization. The families emphasized the caring attitudes and responsiveness of the staff members, which are evident in their relationships and supports offered not only to the customers, but to their families as well. Attention to family involvement and rapid responsiveness to individual needs are readily apparent. Staff has provided arrangements for customers to visit family members several states away, providing transportation, lodging, and financial and emotional support.
- The organization is complimented on the extent in which it strives to recognize the expressed desires and dreams of the customers served. Vacations decided upon by customers such as Myrtle Beach, Atlantic City, Puerto Rico, and the upcoming destination in California support the customer-powered mission.
- There is a very complete program of community integration. All aspects of daily life are based on the input and wishes of the customers served. Each customer and his/ her guardian make decisions about all aspects of services, including input into the choice of daily activities, participation in leisure activities, work opportunities, and attendance at various community events.
- The persons living in the community housing homes decorate their own rooms and take pride and enthusiasm in showing off their homes. Customers served also take ownership in the "red go bags." Each customer has his/ her own individual emergency bag that accompanies him /her when leaving the residence.

CSI should seek improvement in the areas identified by the recommendations in the report. Consultation given does not indicate nonconformance to standards but is offered as a suggestion for further quality improvement.

On balance, CSI has a long history of being a solid, quality service organization. The community housing and supported living programs are respected and appreciated by the customers served and their families. CSI demonstrates a foundation of conformance to the CARF standards, which is an achievement it can be proud of in that it just began this process but months ago. A commitment to the CARF process is clear in the preparation evidenced and the level of conformance demonstrated. The openness to learn during the survey process and the excitement shown to fully implement the CARF standards for further organizational evolution are recognized. The recommendations and consultation given are meant to provide the organization with talking points, planning points, and strategies that can be used to assist in these efforts. Areas that should be focused on include fully implementing the CARF plans; defining timeframes for allegations of its ethical codes of conduct; program level processes for community housing and supported living performance measurement and management; organizational and program policies and procedures that clearly define the needs of those served; full documentation of procedures and drills for all required emergency areas; and

increased, focused training for employees in best practice areas as time and resources allow. The organization clearly has the commitment and desire to address the recommendations found in this report. The willingness to continuously evolve to meet the changing needs of the customers served keeps it focused on organizational growth, program growth, and quality services.

Community Social Integration has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The organization is recognized for the efforts it has made in pursuit of international accreditation. The organization is encouraged to use the CARF accreditation process to build its ongoing and evolving future.