Project Overview

Since 2007, the Crime and Justice Institute (CJI) at Community Resources for Justice has been working with the Court Support Services Division (CSSD) of the State of Connecticut’s Judicial Branch to design, implement and expand its Contractor Data Collection System (CDCS). CDCS is designed to enhance the Division’s ability to use empirical evidence to support decision making toward the improvement of public safety and client outcomes. CDCS is an innovative data system that collects client-level service and treatment data from private providers. These data, when combined with CSSD’s Probation, Bail and Family Services data and arrest information allows for unique opportunities for ongoing quality improvement at the system, program, and client levels, and for rigorous evaluation of CSSD’s internal and contracted programs. CJI has assisted CSSD in:

- Business analysis;
- CDCS site design specific to each of CSSD’s community-based program models;
- Establishment of performance and outcome indicators;
- Report development;
- Database rollout, training, and technical assistance with providers; and,
- Quality assurance.

CSSD’s Quality Assurance Efforts

Beginning in May of 2012, CJI entered into a new relationship with CSSD and is now managing the CDCS quality assurance process. Through onsite data quality reviews, CJI assesses the timeliness and accuracy of data for over 175 individual program locations. Each program location receives a data quality rating that is a key measure of agency performance for contract monitoring purposes.

“I cannot say enough positive things about my experience working with CJI. They were instrumental in helping us design a new data system and put that information into use. While that sounds like a simple task, it often felt like a monumental feat and CJI was a critical part of our team both in the conceptual phase and then transitioning to a maintenance phase. CT’s risk reduction initiative would not be anywhere near as advanced as it is if it were not for CJI’s assistance. In addition, I feel I am a better manager today because of the many skills and concepts I learned from CJI staff.”

This quality assurance process is an essential component to CSSD’s Risk Reduction Initiative, as the Division is confident in the data it utilizes for planning, program improvement, contract monitoring and measuring outcomes. The Risk Reduction Initiative uses the Division’s case management information and the provider data in CDCS to answer these primary questions: How well are the Division and its programs doing? Are Connecticut’s citizens and CSSD’s clients better off as a result of the Division’s work? CJI works with CSSD management, staff and contracted providers to identify program-specific ‘risk reduction indicators,’ carefully define the indicators, design reports, and review, interpret, and use the data to take actions to improve service delivery and outcomes.

Further Information

For more information, please contact Barbara Pierce Parker at bpierce@crj.org.

About the Crime and Justice Institute at CRJ

CJI provides nonpartisan policy analysis, capacity and technical assistance, research and program evaluation, and educational activities throughout the country. For more information on our current projects and staff, please see our website, www.crj.org/cji.