REDARGYLE

CASE STUDY

TECHNOLOGY THAT BUILDS HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES

Community Connections New York (CCNY) helps those who help people in need do their jobs better. Through program evaluation, data collection, data analytics and training, CCNY supports health and human service government agencies and nonprofit organizations serving children and youth with serious and persistent mental illness throughout Erie County, New York.

CHALLENGE

Efficiently Connect Families with Life-Changing Resources

CCNY supports the High Fidelity Wraparound in Erie County, a family-centered approach to serving children and youth with mental illness. It aims to preserve the family unit by coordinating holistic services, such as housing, mental health services, substance abuse services, and other natural supports within the community.

In High Fidelity Wraparound, a family is assigned a care coordinator who partners with them to identify and connect with local services. In the past, doing this efficiently, however, was a challenge.

"The care coordinators and families were sorting through hundreds of vendors and resources," explained David Monroe, Director of Evaluation and Analytics at CCNY. "It was a challenge to find the appropriate resource near the families' home that was culturally and gender appropriate, met their language needs, and so on. Once the family selected a resource, it could take days or weeks to hear back because the system wasn't efficient."

SOLUTION

A Tool Ahead of Its Time

In 2010, CCNY partnered with Red Argyle to create a database and app to help Wraparound care coordinators and families find part-time and per diem help, known as vendors, more quickly and easily.

Red Argyle created a site and app called Family First, which features a detailed list of vendors that care coordinators can intuitively search, sort, and select. Families can participate in the search for appropriate vendors who, in some cases, will be in their homes. This gives care coordinators tools to do this efficiently and families a voice in their care.

> *"Today, we have about 400 vendors, and they are all in the Family First database. There are photos, contact information, and details about their services and people. Our vendors want a good page in Family First because it helps them market themselves to families. Our team at CCNY trains the vendors to create an effective Family First profile, which they take seriously."*

David Monroe, Director of Evaluation and Analytics, CCNY

RESULTS

New Solutions, Long-Lasting Impacts

More than a decade since its launch, the award-winning Family First app is still the go-to tool for care coordinators in Erie County. Families have more choice and control, and searching and sorting resources is significantly faster and easier: Families now receive responses from database vendors in hours instead of days.

"The app was ahead of its time. The app is expected nowadays, but Red Argyle created something groundbreaking. We've made minor updates over the years and have checked in with our partners to ensure they want to keep using it – and they do! It's held its value tremendously."

David Monroe, Director of Evaluation and Analytics, CCNY

Expanding the Partnership: SPOA App

"We can't do QA and evaluation without good data," emphasized Monroe. "Because Family First was such a success, we continued working with Red Argyle on many projects over the years. It shows how good data can help us serve the community."

One of those projects was the SPOA (Single Point of Access) app. The app gives individuals a single point of access to adult mental health services. This includes a database of housing and care management services and tools for referring organizations, like hospitals.

- ✓ When a referral is submitted in the app, it's reviewed and triaged by the local county government, the Erie County Department of Mental Health.
- ✓ The referral is sent to an organization that provides care coordination, housing, or both depending on the need.
- ✓ Discharge is handled through the SPOA app, and outcomes are tracked and reported.
- ✓ In the most recent year available for data, SPOA facilitated 1,931 housing referrals in Erie County and 812 care referrals.

"The entire system of care is complex, but the SPOA app really simplifies it for users. "It involves county agencies, nonprofits, public hospitals, individual counselors...they all use the app and their info is in the app."

David Monroe, Director of Evaluation and Analytics, CCNY

Tech for People's Sake, Not Tech's Sake

The success of projects like Family First and SPOA didn't happen by accident: Close collaboration between CCNY and Red Argyle delivered enduring tools that help transform lives.

"I'm really proud of the work we've done with Red Argyle over the years," said Monroe. "Their team takes the time to understand the why behind our requests. For example, they interviewed families before creating the Family First app so they could better understand how it's used and what families are looking for. Red Argyle understands that tech has to be useful and feasible. In other words, if it's great but no one uses it, it's a failure."

As new Salesforce functionality is released, CCNY incorporates, updates and improves its apps with Red Argyle's guidance and expertise. Monroe notes that Red Argyle has even challenged CCNY on some of their requests, which he appreciates.

"That's the differentiator with Red Argyle; they're systems thinkers. Salesforce is a great platform, and Red Argyle is thinking about usability and feasibility as much as we are. That makes our partnership a real conversation – they're not just taking orders from us about what to do next," he said.

Monroe notes that government agencies that fund projects like Family First and SPOA have asked questions about their use and impact over the years. CCNY has the data to show those results.

"When government hears the why behind what we're doing, they continue to fund it," said Monroe. "This can serve as a model for other communities; how to build technology really well so that it delivers results and value, year over year."

David Monroe, Director of Evaluation and Analytics, CCNY