



The Comprehensive PROBLEM GAMBLING ACT OF 2009

Most Americans do not realize that there is not a single dollar in the Federal health budget dedicated to problem gambling services. Although problem gambling is a critical national public health issue, Federal health agencies have been resistant to requests to address gambling problems because there is no funding authorization.

The Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act (CPG) of 2009 would change that. The legislation, which is co-sponsored by Massachusetts Congressman Barney Frank, amends the Public Health Service Act to designate the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) as the lead Federal agency on problem gambling issues and provides grants to state health agencies, tribes, universities and non-profits for the prevention, treatment and research of problem gambling.

CPG is designed to fill this gap by providing \$14.2 million per year over the next five years—the total appropriation of \$71 million is less than ¼ of 1% of the estimated \$5.3 billion in FY06 Federal revenue from taxes on gambling winnings. This new appropriation ensures that current funding levels for substance abuse and mental health are unaffected.

The act focuses on integrating problem gambling services into the Federal health agencies and supporting existing state-based programs to help problem gamblers and their families. These bills do not expand, restrict or tax gambling.

Model comprehensive problem gambling services include significant prevention, intervention, treatment, and research activities along with products, programs and processes. They include:

- Prevention of problem gambling is essential and includes strategies to target vulnerable, high-risk groups.
- Intervention for problem gamblers so that they do not develop further problems and are enabled to return to problem-free gambling or not gambling.
- Treatment for those with severe gambling problems, services similar to those found in substance abuse treatment programs.

“A different world cannot be built by indifferent people”

-Peter Marshall

- Research to explore the public health consequences of gambling through ongoing surveillance and evaluation.

It is important to remember that it was only 40 years ago when public attitude began to change in regard to drug abuse. Former President Nixon’s administration abandoned demands for a crackdown on drug users and focused on an enlightened approach, which recognized that the best response to drug abuse was more often education and treatment than punishment. These ideas were then backed with appropriate funding. Today, funding for prevention, treatment and research on substance use disorders is commonsense and common practice.

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling believes that prevention, treatment and research for problem gambling

needs to be viewed with the same practicality. Passing the CPC legislation will be a tremendous step in furthering this goal, and removing the stigma associated with problem gambling, therefore providing more people with access to problem gambling programs and services.

YOU CAN HELP!

Contact your Congressional leaders and ask for their support of the Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act (CPG) of 2009:

- Requests from constituents and/or state residents have the greatest impact on members of Congress.
- Passage of this initial legislation will establish federal policy and funding for programs and services to address problem gambling.
- Accomplishing this goal will assist all of us in our local efforts to minimize the impact of problem gambling in our communities.

For more information visit:
www.ncpgambling.org/advocacy

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HELPLINE – NOW OFFERING LIVE CHAT

The Mass. Council constantly works to improve access to its services and make it easier for people to get help who would rather not make a traditional phone call to the Helpline. To that effect, we are very happy to announce that on October 1, 2009, we will launch a live chat feature on our website www.masscompulsivegambling.org. This will allow people to “chat,” or email back and forth with a Helpline Specialist in a dialog box in real time, while still maintaining the same level of compassion and confidentiality offered in the traditional way. According to Helpline Specialist, Bruce Tassone, “We’re exploring non-conventional ways to reach out to people; pertinent ways to help people where they are.” Helpline Specialists will be available to chat Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.



PROBLEM GAMBLING TRAININGS CALENDAR

September 2009 - June 2010

UNDERSTANDING, ASSESSING & TREATING GAMBLING DISORDERS

Regional one-day workshops and online training opportunities offered. Local, national and international audiences welcome to participate.)

Trainings for Clinicians - Reserve your place today. Space is limited. CEUs are available.

Visit the Mass. Council website at <http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org/services/education.php> for further details and to register online.

SEPTEMBER - Half-Day Workshop

Thursday, September 24, 2009

Department of Public Health, Canton

Training for Supervisors of Problem Gambling Treatment Clinicians

OCTOBER - One-Day Workshop

Wednesday, October 7, 2009

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Offices, Boston

Family-Based Interventions for Understanding and Helping the Pathological Gambler to Access Treatment

NOVEMBER - Online Training

Friday, November 13, 2009 – Monday, December 7, 2009

The Gambling Brain: How It Works & How to Treat It

JANUARY - Online Training

Monday, January 11, 2010 – Sunday, January 24, 2010

Developing a Culturally-Conscious Approach to the Prevention and Treatment of Problem Gambling in the Latino Community

FEBRUARY - Online Training

Friday, February 5, 2010 – Thursday, February 25, 2010

Recognizing and Managing Countertransference in Problem Gambling Clinical Work

MARCH - One-Day Workshop

Friday, March 12, 2010

Heritage State Park, Lawrence

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Communities:

Asian & African American Outreach Efforts and Treatment Resources

APRIL - Online Training

Friday, April 9, 2010 – Thursday, April 29, 2010

High School and College Student Gambling: Identifying and Managing Risk

MAY - One-Day Conference

Friday, May 7, 2010

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Worcester

The 2010 Massachusetts Conference on Gambling Problems

Register Online Today

Please register online at <http://masscouncilregistration.org>

Further Questions?

Please contact Council Program Assistant, Peggie Milisci:

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E-mail: peggie@masscompulsivegambling.org

The Council will work to accommodate any needs that you may have. Please contact us with your request at least two weeks prior to the training date you choose. All locations and materials are handicap accessible.

COUNCIL SHARES STRATEGIES For Minimizing Harm of Expanded Gambling

On June 23, 2009 the Council held a forum at the State House to urge legislators to invest in a comprehensive public health plan to combat problem gambling including: prevention, intervention, treatment, research and cross systems services. The event was sponsored by State Representative Elizabeth Malia, D-Jamaica Plain and State Senator Jennifer Flanagan, D-Leominster.

The Council proposed that if Massachusetts policy makers enter into an expansion of gambling availability, they do so carefully, acknowledging that putting responsible gambling policies and practices in place at the outset is essential for mitigating the potential negative impact of expanded gambling on Massachusetts' residents.

"We know that when gambling is made more widely available and is closer in proximity, the number of individuals and families who experience problems with gambling grows," said Kathleen M. Scanlan, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling. "If the state decides to introduce casinos or slots parlors, then it must also invest in a comprehensive public health plan to combat problem gambling including: prevention, intervention, treatment, research and cross systems services."

For the past several years, the Council has been researching the best practices of other states in regards to problem gambling policies. The Council has developed policy guidelines for the development of responsible state supported gambling, and shared several of the recommendations at the event.

"There is no more crucial time to be building awareness of gambling and its attendant social and fiscal costs," said State Representative Elizabeth Malia, D-Jamaica Plain.

"For the vast majority of the population, lottery games are fun and affordable forms of entertainment. But for some, gambling can lead to problems," said Treasurer Timothy Cahill. "The Lottery is proud to support the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and its vital services, which not only assist problem gamblers but also their families and loved ones."

Scanlan said the Patrick Administration, Treasurer Cahill and legislators have been supportive of assuring that resources are available to deal with additional compulsive gambling issues. She said the governor's legislation on expanded gambling two years ago set aside 2.5 percent of gross revenues from expanded gambling to be used for prevention, intervention and treatment. That number, Scanlan said, would put the state in the forefront when it comes to providing comprehensive compulsive gambling services.

In a recent national survey of funding for problem gambling services in the United States, Massachusetts ranked 19th in per capita expenditures to address problem gambling. Among the steps being recommended by the Council should gambling be expanded are:

- Employee training at gambling facilities to enable the recognition and referral of gamblers with problems;
- Creation of educational materials and programs for at-risk youth in areas near likely casino or slot parlor locations;
- Educational materials at gambling facilities along with signage directing gamblers with problems to the helpline;
- Creation of a statewide self-exclusion list giving compulsive gamblers the choice to be barred from any gambling facility;
- Provide a residential treatment facility for crisis stabilization in this state – something now lacking.

"We support gambling here in the Commonwealth, as evidenced by the Lottery. But similar to many things, there are downsides. Chairwoman Malia and I, along with the Department of Public Health are focused on bringing attention to the dangers of addiction and providing resources for those who need it," said State Senator Jennifer Flanagan, D-Leominster.



Kathleen M. Scanlan, Executive Director of the Mass. Council answers questions about problem gambling at the State House.

THE MASSACHUSETTS PARTNERSHIP FOR RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING

The Massachusetts Partnership for Responsible Gambling, an alliance of gambling industry leaders and problem gambling advocates who are committed to responsible gambling practices, was convened by the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling and met for the first time at the Council offices on June 30, 2009.

The mission of the Partnership is to prevent or lessen gambling problems in the lives of Massachusetts' residents through promoting responsible gambling policies. The group has agreed to serve as a forum for sharing knowledge and information about responsible gambling practices, to identify best practices in responsible gambling programs nationally and internationally and to inform the public about responsible gambling practices in Massachusetts.

Representatives from the Massachusetts State Lottery, The Massachusetts Racing Commission, Suffolk Downs, Wonderland and Mohegan Sun joined Council staff for the first meeting. The partnership plans to meet on a regular basis and will host their first event, a Listening Session on Problem Gambling in September (see following article). For more information, please contact Council Special Projects Director, Diane Casey Crowley at 617-426-4554/ diane@masscompulsivegambling.org.

"For years the Mass Council has been at the forefront in helping the citizens of the Commonwealth address the issue of problem gambling. With the possibility that gaming could expand in the Commonwealth in the future, we felt it was important to work with the Council on this pro-active initiative to ensure that everyone understands what has worked best in other jurisdictions."

Chip Tuttle, Chief
Operating Officer at
Suffolk Downs

Listening Session on Responsible Gambling

On Monday September 21, 2009, the Council and the Massachusetts Partnership for Responsible Gambling will host gambling industry representatives, Massachusetts legislators and other stakeholders for a *Listening Session on Responsible Gambling*. This day long meeting will take place at Suffolk Downs and will include presentations and discussion with leaders throughout the United States and Canada who have effective responsible gambling programs in place. It will provide Massachusetts policy makers and gambling industry leaders an opportunity to hear about initiatives that experts and practitioners are implementing in order to reduce gambling problems for their patrons. For more information, please contact Council Special Projects Director, Diane Casey Crowley at 617-426-4554/ diane@masscompulsivegambling.org.

COUNCIL STAFF Receive National Awards



Jim Wuelfing, Keith Whyte (Executive Director of the National Council on Problem Gambling) and Ryan Martin pictured at the 2009 National Council on Problem Gambling Conference

Education and Promotion at the University of Alabama. It examined the role of the theory of planned behavior (TPB; i.e., intentions, subjective norms, perceived behavioral control, and attitudes) in predicting gambling frequency among college student gamblers.

Findings suggest that college problem gambling prevention efforts focused toward non-problem gamblers should target misperceptions of approval regarding gambling behavior (i.e., subjective norms), personal approval of gambling behavior (i.e., attitudes), and perceived behavioral control to better manage gambling behavior in various situations. People working to reduce gambling among college students experiencing gambling problems may consider exploring these alternative approaches.

For more information about Dr. Martin's research findings, please contact him at 617-426-4554/ ryan@masscompulsivegambling.org.

The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is pleased to announce that staff members, Jim Wuelfing and Ryan J. Martin, have received awards from the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG).

Prevention Director, **Jim Wuelfing** has been awarded the National Council on Problem Gambling's (NCPG) first "Prevention Award." A dedicated member of the prevention field for the majority of his professional career, Jim has directed his knowledge and expertise specifically to problem gambling prevention for nearly 15 years.

An excellent presenter, trainer and facilitator, Jim has developed and strengthened effective prevention of problem gambling programming not only in Massachusetts, but across the country. He has maintained a strong emphasis on outreach to high risk groups and underserved populations, and has built networks with other prevention providers that help to advance the prevention of problem gambling. Under his direction, effective multi-focal outreach efforts are underway in the Commonwealth.

Jim advocates consistently for the inclusion of prevention in the full continuum of

problem gambling services, both on the state and federal levels. He can be counted on to regularly stress "model programs" as he advocates for agencies and organizations to apply research and strategies effective for substance use disorders and think about the relevancy and connections to problem gambling. In addition, he works to build the capacity of the existing prevention infrastructure, community-based organizations, faith-based organizations and educational institutions to address problem gambling.

Ryan J. Martin, PhD, Thomas N. Cummings Postdoctoral Research Fellow, was awarded the National Council on Problem Gambling's (NCPG) "2009 Dissertation Award." The annual award was established by the NCPG in 1999 to acknowledge superior research efforts among young scholars in the field.

Dr. Martin presented his dissertation findings at the 23rd National Conference on Problem Gambling, which took place June 25-27 in Indianapolis, IN. His dissertation entitled "An Examination of Gambling Behavior Among College Students Using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)," was completed as part of the doctoral program in Health



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The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, non-profit health agency dedicated to reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling. The Council provides prevention, information, education, advocacy, and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones, and the greater community.

The Council is funded in part by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.

Massachusetts Problem Gambling Treatment Centers

- Boston ASAP, Boston: 617.482.5292
- Community Care Services, Attleboro MA: 508-226-1660, ext. 213
- Henry Lee Willis Community Center, Worcester: 508.799.2934
- Lowell House, Inc., Lowell: 978.459.8656
- Mt. Auburn Hospital Prevention & Recovery Center, Cambridge: 617.499.5051
- Stanley Street Treatment & Resources, Inc., Fall River: 508.679.5222
- Steppingstone, Inc., Fall River: 508.674.2788 ext. 120
- Team Coordinating Agency, Inc., Haverhill: 978.373.1181 ext. 42

Resources

- Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling Helpline: 800.426.1234
- Gamblers Anonymous MA Hotline: 617.338.6020
- Bettors Anonymous: 978.988.1777 or 781.662.5199
- Gam-Anon (family/friends): 888.644.8482
- National Council on Problem Gambling Helpline: 800.522.4700
- Division on Addictions, Cambridge Health Alliance, a teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School: 781.306.8600

WANTED! Your e-mail Address

In an effort to reduce paper waste, as well as conserve financial resources in challenging economic times, the Council has begun to send out more of its newsletters and other information via e-mail. If you are not receiving e-newsletters from the Council, please sign up today. It's easy! Simply visit www.masscompulsivegambling.org/news/newsletters.php and type in your name and e-mail address.

COUNCIL Seeks Speakers

The Council is seeking people in recovery, and family members alike, from all areas of the state, to share their personal experiences with problem gambling. In order to further our mission, the Council would like people who are willing to speak to media and/or groups to raise public awareness about how problem gambling impacts lives. If you are interested in participating, please contact Program Director, Marlene Warner, at the Council at 617-426-4554/marlene@masscompulsivegambling.org or Mac M., PR Chair, Gamblers Anonymous at 617-721-5351/ macgapr@gmail.com.

Mark Your Calendars!

THE MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S
2009 OUNCE OF PREVENTION CONFERENCE

Facing the Future: Healthy People, Places and Policies

Tuesday, October 6, 2009 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel & Trade Center in Marlborough

*For further information on this conference,
please contact AdCare Educational Institute at 508-752-7313.*