Gambling Prevention & Treatment

Division of Behavioral Health
Phone: 515-281-8802
www.1800betsoff.org

Promoting & Protecting the Health of Iowans

IDPH Iowa Department of Public Health

For the vast majority of people, office pools, lottery tickets or a trip to the casino are harmless entertainment. For some, however, gambling leads to serious problems that also harm people close to them and the wider community. For problem gamblers, the Iowa Gambling Prevention and Treatment Program is here to help.

Gambling had taken control of Jeff's life two years ago. In that short time, he amassed nearly $110,000 in credit card debt and was on the verge of bankruptcy. He spent hours away from his family and work to be at the casino. He opened extra credit cards and maxed them out. As the bills began to catch up, he knew he needed to stop but couldn't put the brakes on his habit himself. "I didn't know what I was going to do," he said. "Without Allen Hospital's gambling treatment program, I wouldn't have been able to quit. Treatment hasn't been easy but I've learned to cope with stress and the urges to gamble. I've got a long ways to go to be out of debt but I know I have the skills to do it…. I have hope."

Did you know?

Since the mid-1970's, we have gone from a nation in which legal gambling activity was extremely rare to a nation in which legal gambling is permitted in all but a few states. In Iowa, there are 21 casinos, 2,400 lottery outlets, over 3,000 social and charitable gaming licenses, and countless internet and other illegal gaming opportunities.

Why is Gambling Prevention & Treatment important to promoting and protecting the health of Iowans?

- Approximately 12% of all adult Iowans reported that they experienced a symptom of problem gambling in the last 12 months.
- More than 1 in 5 (22%) of adult Iowans have been negatively affected by the gambling behavior of a family member, friend, or someone else they know.
- Iowans with gambling problems report money spent gambling led to financial, personal, family, and work problems.
- Treatment is effective in reducing or eliminating gambling and associated problems like debt and employment problems.
- The 1-800-BETS-OFF helpline offers Iowans help and information. Almost 5,500 calls were logged to the helpline in FY2012.

Which Iowa Public Health Goals are we working to achieve?

Promote healthy behaviors

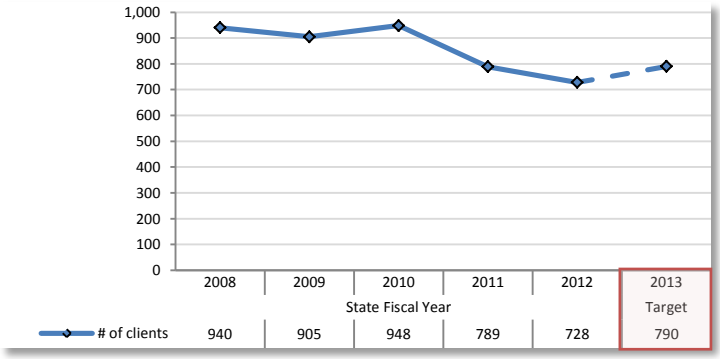
Strengthen the public health infrastructure

What do we do?

- Fund counseling for problem gamblers and those affected by the gambling of a family member.
- Fund Recovery Support Services to provide practical support and assistance for persons receiving problem gambling counseling.
- Fund primary prevention and education services on the risks and responsibilities of gambling.
- Fund secondary prevention services for groups at increased risk of problem gambling.
- Fund helpline referral and education services through 1-800-BETS OFF and www.1800betsoff.org.
- Fund training and professional development for counselors providing treatment for problem gambling and common co-occurring disorders.
- Promote a Recovery Oriented System of Care that supports long-term recovery efforts of Iowans.

How do we measure our progress?

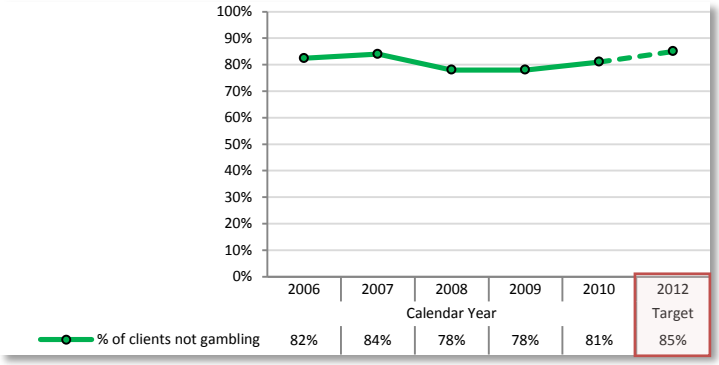
❶ **Number of clients admitted for counseling services to a state funded provider.**



Data Source: Gambling Treatment Reporting System (GTRS). Data are available annually.

How are we doing? In SFY2012, 728 clients received counseling services.

❷ **Percent of discharged clients who report no gambling in the past 30 days.**



Data Source: Iowa Gambling Treatment Outcome System. Beginning in 2010 data will be reported bi-annually. 2012 data not yet available.

How are we doing? Of clients discharged from treatment in 2010, 81% reported no gambling in the past 30 days, which is slightly higher than the previous year.

What can Iowans do to help?

1. If you or someone you care about is struggling with problem gambling, call 1-800-BETS-OFF for help.
2. Pathological gambling often co-occurs with and can elevate other mental health, substance use or health problems. Understand the signs and symptoms of problem gambling and how to treat it or where to refer people for help. Training, education and information on problem gambling is available through Training Resources at www.trainingresources.org and the Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center at www.drugfreeinfo.org.
3. All Iowans can find more information about problem gambling at www.1800betsoff.org.

Expenditures

General fund: K01-0222

	State Fiscal Year 2011 Actual	State Fiscal Year 2012 Actual	State Fiscal Year 2013 Estimate
State funds	$3,189,000	$3,066,989	$3,111,614
Total funds	**$3,189,000**	**$3,066,989**	**$3,111,614**
FTEs	2.41	2.41	2.40

Note: Funding information is intended to provide an overview of funding related to the program area. It does not include all federal and state requirements and/or restrictions for the use of funds. Contact the program area for more detailed budget information.

Iowa Department of Public Health ◆ Division of Behavioral Health ◆ Gambling Treatment Program

Phone: 515-281-8802 ◆ Fax: 515-281-4535 ◆ www.1800betsoff.org ◆ www.idph.state.ia.us/bh/gambling_treatment.asp

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