



Iowa Department of Public Health

FACT SHEET

Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention

Problem Gambling In Iowa

During the past twenty-five years Iowa has seen a boom of gaming opportunities. In 2009, there are 20 casinos, 2600 lottery outlets, over 3000 social and charitable gaming licenses, and countless internet and other illegal gaming opportunities. This has created easy access to gambling in every county of the state.

Problem Gambling Defined

For most people, gambling is recreational. However, for some people, gambling leads to serious problems. Problem gambling means participation in any form of gambling activity that creates a negative consequence to the gambler or to the gambler's family, place of employment, or community. The adjacent table identifies the signs and symptoms of problem gambling.

Problem Gambling Signs and Symptoms
1. Preoccupation with gambling
2. Need to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement
3. Repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back or stop gambling
4. Restlessness or irritability when attempting to cut down or stop gambling
5. Gambling as a way to escape
6. After losing money gambling, returning another day to "get even"
7. Lying to conceal the extent of gambling
8. Committing illegal acts to finance gambling
9. Jeopardizing or losing significant relationships because of gambling
10. Relying on others to provide money to relieve financial problems caused by gambling

Program Overview

Services and programs offered through the Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention (OPGTP) are guided by a public health approach that takes into consideration biological, behavioral, economic and cultural determinants influencing gambling and health. It incorporates prevention, education, and multiple treatment types by placing emphasis on quality of life issues for gamblers, families and communities. By appreciating the multiple dimensions of gambling, services have been developed to incorporate strategies that minimize gambling's negative impacts while realizing the reality of gambling's availability, cultural acceptance and economic appeal.

Services funded by OPGTP include:

- Counseling for persons affected directly or indirectly by problem gambling.
- Evidence-based education and outreach services to decrease the number of persons who are problem gamblers.
- Information about problem gambling and treatment referral through the 1-800-BETS OFF helpline.
- Transitional housing for persons receiving problem gambling treatment who have no other safe housing option
- Training for counselors providing problem gambling treatment and common co-occurring disorders.

Clients Served

Gambling treatment, education and transitional housing services are provided by 9 agencies in 11 regions across the state. Through these agencies and their partners, all 99 Iowa counties are served.

Fiscal Year	Number of hours of problem gambling education and prevention	Number of clients receiving counseling services	Number of Calls to 1800-BETSOFF helpline*
2002	1717	842	1557
2003	1922	919	2322
2004	1925	938	2231
2005	3447	1009	2756
2006	3500	1205	3297
2007	5963	1146	3613
2008	4814	940	3820
2009	5816	905	3435

*Gambling specific. The total call number is higher.

Funding

The Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention receives an allocation from the State General Fund. In FY2010, \$4,078,035 is dedicated to the treatment and prevention of problem gambling. This amount is a 5% reduction from previous fiscal years and a change of funding source. Prior to FY2010, a Gamblers Treatment Fund received 0.5% of the gross lottery revenue and 0.5% of the adjusted gross receipts from the casinos. This fund and funding formula were eliminated in SFY2010.

Office of Problem Gambling Treatment/Prevention State Fiscal Year 2010 Budget	
Gambling Treatment/Education Services	\$2,397,367
Problem Gambling Transitional Housing	\$263,050
1-800-BetsOff Helpline	\$82,300
Treatment Outcome Monitoring	\$105,500
Marketing/advertising	\$680,000
Workforce Development	\$79,000
Data Reporting System Development	\$206,000
Memberships/Affiliations	\$750
IDPH Administration Costs	\$263,168
TOTAL	\$4,077,635

Problem Gambling Prevalence Studies

Two studies measuring the prevalence of problem gambling have been done in Iowa using an independent national research firm. Both studies examined lifetime prevalence rates of problem gambling among Iowans using a sample of 750 respondents in 1989 and 1500 respondents in 1995. Respondents were drawn from Iowa's general population, aged 18 and over. The lifetime prevalence of problem gambling in 1995 was 5.4% (+/-1.1%), which was an increase over 1.7% (+/-0.9%) prevalence in 1989.

Service Transition Plan

Over the next five years, IDPH envisions a transition to a more comprehensive and integrated recovery-oriented system of care for addictive disorders built on coordination and collaboration across problem gambling education and treatment, substance abuse prevention, and substance abuse treatment. Changes in this transition will be consistent with the 2008 legislative direction in SF 2425 and HF 811.