

**Iowa Department of Public Health
Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention
September 2014**

Gambling venues in Iowa

Over the past 20 years, Iowa has seen a dramatic increase in gaming opportunities. As of September 2014, Iowans can choose from 18 casinos licensed by the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission, three tribal casinos, 2,400 lottery outlets, and over 2,600 social and charitable gaming licenses, as well as numerous internet and other illegal gaming opportunities. The cumulative effect of this increase is 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, employer, or community. See the adjacent table for the signs and symptoms of problem gambling.

Overview of services

Services funded through the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Office of Problem Gambling Treatment and Prevention are guided by a public health approach that considers the biological, behavioral, economic and cultural determinants that influence gambling and health. This approach incorporates a balance of outreach, education, prevention, treatment, and recovery support efforts that work together to minimize gambling's potential negative impacts on individuals, families and communities, while recognizing gambling's availability, cultural acceptance and economic appeal.

Gambling Disorder (DSM-5) - Signs and Symptoms <i>Four or more of the following in a 12-month period</i>
1. Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement.
2. Is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
3. Has made repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back or stop gambling.
4. Is often preoccupied with gambling (e.g., having persistent thoughts of reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble).
5. Often gambles when feeling distressed (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
6. After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even ("chasing one's losses").
7. Lies to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling.
8. Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.
9. Relies on others to provide money to relieve financial situations caused by gambling.

IDPH contracts with eleven local agencies to provide problem gambling prevention, treatment and recovery support services in eleven service regions that together encompass all 99 Iowa counties. Problem gambling treatment programs must be licensed by IDPH and are selected for contracting through a competitive request for proposals process.

Funded problem gambling services include:

- **Counseling** for problem gamblers and those affected by the gambling of a family member.
 - Phone- and web-based counseling – defined as “distance treatment” – is available for eligible persons with barriers to accessing face-to-face treatment services.
- **Prevention Strategies** provide information and education on the risks and responsibilities of gambling and assistance for individuals at increased risk of problem gambling.
- **Helpline referral and education** through 1-800-BETS OFF and www.1800BETSOFF.org, including a live chat option initiated in 2014.
- **Recovery Support Services** provide helpful supportive services like transportation assistance for persons receiving problem gambling counseling.
- **Training and professional development** for counselors providing treatment for problem gambling and common co-occurring conditions, like substance use and mental health disorders.

Problem Gambling Prevention and Treatment Services - Utilization				
State Fiscal Year	# of Prevention Hours	# of Clients Treated	# of Gambling Calls to 1-800-BETS OFF Helpline	Traffic to www.1800BETSOFF.org
2005	3,447	1,009	2,756	-
2006	3,500	1,205	3,297	-
2007	5,963	1,146	3,613	-
2008	4,814	940	3,820	-
2009	5,816	905	3,435	-
2010	9,077	948	3,942	-
2011	7,435	789	3,695	6,156
2012	6,602	728	4,029	13,599
2013	7,682	678	4,122	14,353
2014	7,710	602	5,417	11,208

Problem Gambling Prevention and Treatment Services - Expenditures				
Activity	2015 (Budget)	2014 (Actual)	2013 (Actual)	2012(Actual)
Treatment Services	1,211,374	853,542	794,831	819,437
Prevention Services	1,052,820	999,027	1,057,141	908,837
Recovery Support Services	119,806	51,234	50,999	36,106
1-800-BETS OFF Helpline/Website	86,418	88,967	80,195	80,440
Surveillance (BRFSS)/Outcome Monitoring	93,900	145,872	113,939	38,679
Health Promotion	84,185	136,776	227,222	200,000
Training/Professional Development	137,908	78,359	78,217	333,832

Data Reporting System	57,375	85,731	67,766	105,184
IDPH Administration Costs	267,328	372,813	269,778	519,108
TOTAL	3,111,614	2,812,321	2,740,089	3,041,623

Funding - IDPH receives an appropriation from the State General Fund for problem gambling services.

Gambling Prevalence in Iowa

In 2014, IDPH funded the [*Gambling Attitudes and Behaviors: A 2013 Survey of Adult Iowans*](#) by the University of Northern Iowa Center for Social and Behavioral Research (UNI-CSBR). The purpose of the survey, a follow-up to a 2011 report, was to collect data from adult Iowans about:

- Types and frequency of gambling activities,
- Prevalence of problem gambling, and
- Awareness and opinions of publicly-funded gambling treatment services.

The survey questionnaire was completed by a random sample of 1,826 adult Iowans, weighted to reflect the Iowa adult population. The survey provided the following information:

- Gambling rates among adult Iowans: The 2013 prevalence rates of gambling among adult Iowans were: 93.4% lifetime (ever), 77.8% during the past 12 months, and 46.4% during the past 30 days. The rate of gambling behavior in the past 12 months in 2013 was significantly higher than 2011 (77.8% vs. 68.9%). It is estimated that almost 1.8 million adult Iowans gambled during the past 12 months.
- Problem gambling prevalence among adult Iowans: 16% of adult Iowans reported experiencing at least one symptom associated with problem gambling during the past 12 months. There is a consistent pattern for younger age groups and lower income individuals to have a higher prevalence of problem gambling.

- Reasons for gambling: The main reasons adult Iowans gave for gambling were for entertainment or fun (76.4%) followed by excitement or challenge (50.7%).
- Impact of problem gambling on others: The negative physical, emotional and financial consequences of problem gambling can affect family, friends, coworkers and others. About 1 in 5 adult Iowans (17.7%) said they have been negatively affected by the gambling behavior of someone they know. Specifically, those who said they were negatively affected were as follows:
 - Negatively affected by a family member's gambling: 10.8%
 - Negatively affected by a friend/coworker's gambling: 8.2%
 - Negatively affected by gambling behaviors of someone else they know personally: 14.8%
- Nearly 1 in 3 (29.8%) Iowans reported that they know a person with financial, physical, or emotional problems caused by gambling.

Treatment Effectiveness

IDPH contracts with UNI-CSBR to monitor and analyze problem gambling treatment outcomes. The [Iowa Gambling Treatment Outcomes System: 2013](#) found significant improvements for persons who received state-funded treatment. Highlights:

- Those seeking treatment: Nearly three-fourths of those seeking treatment were doing so for the first time; a much higher percentage than historically observed.
- Reduced or quit problem gambling behaviors: Among those successfully completing treatment, 98% had reduced or quit their problem gambling behaviors.
- Days gambled in the past 30 days: Among those who entered treatment having gambled during the past 30 days, the mean number of days gambled decreased from 7.8 days at admission to 0.6 days at discharge.
- Late paying bills: Among those who said at admission that they had been late paying bills, 74% said they had not been late paying bills in the 30 days prior to completing treatment.
- Current problem gambling symptoms: Among those successfully completing treatment, 2% were classified as current (past 30 days) pathological gamblers compared to 70% upon admission.
- Relationships: Among those who at admission reported difficulties with family or friends, 78% said they had not had such difficulties in the 30 days prior to completing treatment.
- Responsibilities: Among those who at admission had difficulty managing their responsibilities at work, school or home, 94% said they had not had such difficulties in the 30 days prior to completing treatment.

For SFY 2015, IDPH has again contracted with UNI-CSBR to complete the bi-annual Iowa Gambling Treatment Outcomes report.

Education and Prevention First

Problem gambling education and prevention services inform Iowans about the risks and responsibilities of gambling. This work takes place on many fronts. Examples include:

- A health promotion campaign to encourage Iowans to evaluate their gambling behavior and seek help if they have a problem
- Educating employers about the cost of problem gambling to their businesses
- Partnering with state-regulated casinos to train employees and educate and inform patrons
- Partnering with the Iowa Lottery to inform players that help is available for problem gambling
- School-based prevention efforts for high risk youth

The effectiveness of IDPH education and prevention efforts can be seen in the following:

- 74.3% of adult Iowans say they are extremely or moderately confident that they would recognize the signs that a friend or family member has a gambling problem.
- 89.4% are aware of the 1-800-BETS OFF Helpline.
- 98.2% admire the courage of people who seek help for a gambling problem.
- 84.2% say it would be very or fairly easy to talk with someone if they have a gambling problem.
- 77.1% say they would be able to talk to someone in their community if they had gambling problems.

IDPH efforts to increase service accessibility and efficiency

In SFY2014, it is estimated that approximately 9,000 adult Iowans met criteria for problem gambling. State-funded problem gambling services were provided to approximately 6% of those Iowans. While this is significantly greater than the average (0.18%) for other states with similar programs, it suggests there is a significant gap between the number of people who need services and the actual number who receive those services. IDPH continues to work with providers to support an efficient network of care that reaches all Iowans in need. One example of those efforts is the enhancement and expansion of distance treatment statewide using phone and web-based treatment options. While it's not feasible to offer treatment in every Iowa community, distance treatment options help Iowans with barriers to face-to-face treatment get the help they need.

Service System Transition

Five years ago, IDPH initiated a transition to a comprehensive and integrated resiliency- and recovery-oriented system of care for Iowans with addictive disorders. This system transition focuses on coordination and collaboration across problem gambling and substance use disorder education, prevention, treatment, and recovery support. All efforts are consistent with the 2008 legislative directives in SF 2425 and HF 811 and with state and national healthcare reform to-date.

Below is a listing of specific system transition categories and examples of progress made:

- ***Program licensure standards*** – Separate problem gambling and substance use disorder program licensure standards were combined into one integrated set of standards effective July 1, 2010.
- ***Practitioner credentialing*** – The integrated program licensure standards specify basic requirements for problem gambling and substance abuse treatment counselors.
- ***Training/professional development*** – IDPH’s annual Governor’s Conference on Substance Abuse and annual Prevention Conference both include tracks on problem gambling.
- ***Local collaboration*** – Ten of the eleven state-funded problem gambling agencies also provide substance abuse treatment and/or prevention services.
- ***Funding and funding methodologies*** – Problem gambling reimbursement rates and methodologies were aligned with substance abuse services effective July 1, 2011.
- ***Services and supports*** – Distance treatment approaches similar to those used in problem gambling services are being implemented in IDPH-funded substance abuse treatment settings.

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