
SFY 2023-24

OHIO PROBLEM
GAMBLING SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT & PLAN

Presented to the Ohio Casino Control Commission

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by the

Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

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LOOKING BACK AT 2023

This report highlights the Problem Gambling Services continuum of care within the Office of Prevention at the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) and its collaboration with Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG). ORG is composed of OhioMHAS, the Ohio Casino Control Commission, Ohio Lottery Commission, and the Ohio State Racing Commission.

The collective efforts of these agencies and many others exist to ensure that Ohioans have an array of supports for prevention, responsible gambling awareness, treatment and recovery related to problem gambling and Gambling Disorder. These efforts are reflected in this SFY 2023 annual report and plan for SFY 2024. While the challenges and landscape of gaming and gambling are constantly evolving, the resolve, adaptability and commitment to excellence is demonstrated in this summary of the past year's progress. At the center of this work are the Ohioans we serve. The "Ohio Model," a moniker given to showcase Ohio's leadership in problem gambling services, embodies the collaboration and spirit that places the individual first, while developing a service structure to meet family and community needs as they arise.



In July 2023, Ohio was once again well represented by many state professionals who work in the problem gambling field. At the National Problem Gambling Conference in Washington, DC.

MILESTONES FOR SFY 2023

Ohio Earns Honors for Responsible Gambling Efforts

Each year, the National Council on Problem Gambling honors individuals and organizations from across the U.S. and the world for their work in problem gambling prevention, treatment, and responsible gambling. The honors come in the form of national awards, including Lifetime and Annual Awards.

Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG), the Ohio Casino Control Commission, the Ohio Lottery Commission, and Dr. Amanda Jo Burke received top honors at the [2023 National Conference on Gambling Addiction & Responsible Gambling Awards Ceremony](#), held in July. Competing against other corporate and state affiliate problem gambling prevention programs, Ohio was honored in five major award categories:

- *2023 Corporate Media Award* – Sutton Dunnington, WNWO Toledo, won for outstanding reporting by a news organization in any communications channel that has best-covered problem gambling. Zepf Center’s Problem Gambling Manager, Steve Kapela, was the interview subject.
- *2023 Corporate People’s Choice Award* – Ohio for Responsible Gambling’s “Pause Before You Play” (sports betting-focused print ad), won for the most popular print public awareness message in the past year.
- *2023 Jim Wuelfing Annual Award for Prevention* – Townhall II’s Dr. Amanda Jo Burke won this award (posthumously) that recognizes outstanding achievement in advocacy, development, integration, outreach, research, or training around the prevention of problem gambling.
- *2023 Corporate Public Awareness Campaign* – Ohio for Responsible Gambling’s “Make The Call” (Ohio’s Problem Gambling Helpline Campaign), was recognized as the outstanding original public awareness campaign that has increased awareness of problem gambling.
- *2023 Corporate Website Award* – The Ohio Casino Control and Ohio Lottery Commissions won this award for an outstanding website that has increased awareness of problem gambling with their collaboration on TimeOutOhio.com. The new website educates, provides resources and allows Ohioans to ban themselves from Ohio casinos, racinos and sports wagering.



Ohio also had numerous speakers presenting on various problem gambling issues and they include:

-Scott Anderson (OhioMHAS)	-Cory Brown (Ohio Casino Control Commission)
-Michael Buzzelli (PGNO)	-Alessandro Ciaffoncini (Origo)
-Susan Diamond (Ohio Lottery Commission)	-Stacey Frohnapfel-Hasson (OhioMHAS)
-Kelly Garza (Zepf Center)	-George Hicks (ArkBuilders)
-Nora Larson (Recovery Resources)	-Nabil Pervaiz (Recovery Resources)
-Abdallah Mobaideen (Ohio in Arabic Foundation)	-Ala Shaikhkhail (Ohio in Arabic Foundation)

HIGHLIGHTS in CAPACITY-BUILDING: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Problem Gambling Service Consultation

While significant strides have been made to address workforce needs in Ohio, the Problem Gambling Service Consultation Program supports specific organizational needs throughout Ohio’s continuum of care to help meet the demands of an everchanging landscape. The Problem Gambling Network of Ohio, with the support of Ohio for Responsible Gambling, worked with six organizations to integrate sustainable changes that include environmental scans in the community, policy changes in the office, distance learning within and beyond the borders of Ohio, and numerous other changes that helped these organizations become more adept at understanding, preventing and treating problem gambling.

The six organizations that participated in the program were: Bayshore Counseling Services (Erie County), University of Cincinnati School of Social Work, CHC Addictions Services (Summit County), The LCADA Way (Lorain County), Envision Partnerships (Butler County), and Signature Health (6 offices throughout Northeast Ohio). Each organization met five times formally and were given ongoing support throughout their individual initiatives.

Service Consultation Spotlight: University of Cincinnati School of Social Work

The significant impact of each of these agencies above cannot be overstated and will have a lasting effect on Ohioans. However, the University of Cincinnati School of Social Work (UCCSW) warrants a special spotlight. It is the first institution of higher learning in Ohio to integrate problem gambling education into its program for both undergraduates and graduates. The school has also integrated problem gambling education into its distance learning program spanning nine counties in Ohio and four other states. Additionally, 10



participants in the program began working on their GAMB credential through the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board. The UCCSW has also created a coalition to promote problem gambling prevention and address workforce needs.

REAL IMPACT FOR OHIO

Organizational Impacts Include:

- Environmental scans conducted
- Needs assessment completed
- Cultural shifts
- Adding capacity
- Adding PG screening tools
- Improved referral process
- Increased internal awareness for PG services in Ohio
- Offering new PG education in social work programs, parenting and high school financial classes
- Creating PG coalitions for Prevention & Treatment

Significant Highlights by the Numbers:

- 2000 students learned about PG in over 75 unique sessions from 35 different schools
- 18 new clinicians became GAMB endorsed
- 59 staff members participated in activities expanding PG at their respective organizations

Workforce Capacity: Stages Training:

To help reduce travel burdens and associated costs for workforce training, the Problem Gambling Network of Ohio continued to offer workforce Stages trainings virtually in SFY23. Below is a brief summary of the various trainings conducted:

Stage I: This training focuses on Ohio's service system and is a 12-hour training offered over three days to an audience of prevention, behavioral health and problem gambling treatment professionals, and recovery advocates. The training was held five times during FY23 with a total of 101 participants.

Stage II/Applications & Approaches in Treating Gambling Disorder: This training focuses on application and approaches treating gambling and was also held for 12 hours over three days. Facilitated by Dr. Heather Chapman, this training was conducted three times during SFY23 with a total of 74 participants.

Stage II/Prevention: Focusing on strategies in preventing problem gambling, this training was held for 12 hours over three days and held twice in SFY23 with a total of 15 participants.

NEW: Stage III/Introduction to the Role of Family and Finance in Gambling Disorder

Treatment: This experiential and didactic training has participants explore family structure, the impact that gambling can have on family, as well as how to engage family members in the treatment process. Participants also explore their own personal and cultural attitudes about money, as well as the role of money in treatment and recovery from problem gambling. This training was held three times with a total of 106 participants.

Ohio Problem Gambling Treatment Fellowship

The Ohio Problem Gambling Treatment Fellowship is an intensive year-long educational and supervisory program for treatment professionals offered by the Problem Gambling Network of Ohio. The program aims to prepare clinicians to provide gambling treatment services, improve gambling treatment services in private practices and community agencies, enhance professional development, and strengthen Ohio workforce. The Fellowship Program consists of monthly meetings and training with Fellowship facilitator Michael Rosen. The program is concluded with a case presentation. On June 9, 2023, the following 5 fellows graduated from the program: **Kelly Dominic**, (Ohio Guidestone, Lancaster) **Sadigoh Galloway**, (Your Recovery Counseling, Beachwood), **Mike Gersz**, (Maryhaven, Columbus), **Rachel Johnson**, (Cincinnati), and **Brook Strumbel**, (Signature Health, Maple Heights).



Front: Stacey Frohnafel-Hasson, and Fellows graduates Sadigoh Galloway, Rachel Johnson, Brook Strumbel and Mike Gersz. Back: Milan Karna, Kelly Dominic, Instructor Mike Rosen, and Scott Anderson.

Gambling Disorder Case Presentations

The Problem Gambling Network of Ohio offers Gambling Disorder Case Presentations, a series of 1.5-hour webinars held every other month. These webinars cater to both newcomers and experienced professionals in treating problem gambling. Led by a certified gambling clinician, they provide insights into screening tools and treatment strategies. Each case delves into various aspects and nuances of treating problem gambling. For instance, in SFY23, one case study featured a collector of Pokémon and sports cards who met the criteria for severe gambling disorder. In total, six unique cases were shared, benefiting a total of 249 participants.

Gambling Endorsement and Information Sessions

In addition to the Case Presentations, both Supervision and Consultation Virtual Meetings were held every alternate month, and these 90-minute sessions fulfill the supervision hours required for clinicians pursuing the GAMB endorsements from the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board. These meetings also contribute to competency requirements for the Counselor, Social Work, and Marriage and Family Therapist Board. These sessions supported practicing gambling clinicians across the state, engaging 64 participants. Notably, the Gambling Endorsement (GAMB) was achieved by 69 total Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors in SFY 2023. The total GAMB endorsed clinicians as of October 2023 is 81, nearly tripled from just four years ago.

20th Ohio Problem Gambling Conference

The 20th Ohio Problem Gambling Conference spanned two days and highlighted major growth in the state's problem gambling services field over past two decades. The first day featured workshops, while the second day focused on sports betting in Ohio. Organized by the Problem Gambling Network of Ohio and sponsored by Ohio for Responsible Gambling, the February, 2023 conference drew more than 300 professionals. Themed "Bridging the Gap: Reflecting on 20 Years of Service & Preparing for the Future," the conference featured Ohio's problem gambling support services history. It also addressed the current and future impacts of sports betting. The second day had distinguished keynote panelists from OhioMHAS, Ohio Casino Control Commission, and the Ohio Lottery Commission.



Stacey Frohnappel-Hasson, Chief, Office of Prevention and Problem Gambling, OhioMHAS, Jimmie Hicks, Deputy Director of Responsible Gambling, Ohio Lottery and Amanda Blackford, Director of Operations & Problem Gambling Services, Ohio Casino Control Commission held a panel session on the second day of the 20th Ohio Problem Gambling Conference.

Also, in February, a two-day virtual pre-conference was provided and up to eight CEUs for attendees were offered for those needing problem gambling-related and/or behavioral health professional credits. The attendance for the virtual conference more than tripled from the year prior with 205 participants. Overall, for both the virtual and main conferences, there were a total of 348 participants.

ADDRESSING SPORTS GAMBLING IN OHIO



The TimeOut Ohio Voluntary Program

Launched in December 2022, alongside the initiation of sports gaming in Ohio on January 1, 2023, TimeOut Ohio is managed in collaboration with the Ohio Lottery and the Ohio Casino Control Commissions. Formerly known as the Ohio Voluntary Exclusion Program, TimeOut Ohio now permits self-bans from sports gaming, in addition to casinos and racinos. The self-imposed ban, which can last one year, five years, or a lifetime, restricts access to Ohio casinos and racino properties, as well as participation in Ohio sports gaming. The ban may extend to affiliated properties outside Ohio. TimeOutOhio.com offers resources including an explanatory video, an online application process that includes identity verification

as well as additional support resources. Moreover, TimeOut Ohio also offers a complementary, one-year Gamban subscription for individuals to block global access to gambling websites and apps on mobile devices and computers.

Since 2012, there have been nearly 6,700 Ohioans who have enrolled, with 1,000 participants from 36 other states or international destinations at the end of SFY23. From launch to the end of SFY23, the new TimeOut Ohio had 620 individuals in the program.

Ready, Get Set, Go: A Journey Toward Responsible Sports Betting in Ohio

A comprehensive five-part webinar series, "Ready, Get Set, Go," aimed to inform participants on sports betting updates, tools, and resources to engage clients, operators, regulators, and local communities. Leading up to the legalization of sports betting in Ohio, these webinars emphasized the use of clinical supervision and consultation to enhance counselor responsibilities in serving clients more effectively. PGNO successfully hosted five sessions from October to December, engaging with a total of 456 participants.

Sports Betting Sub-Campaign: Pause Before You Play

In response to Ohio's evolving gambling landscape and the rapid expansion of sports betting options, the partnership of Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG) and Origo Branding introduced a sub-campaign named "Pause Before You Play" under the larger initiative "Before You Bet." The sub-campaign specifically addresses responsible gambling in the midst of potential rapid wagering on sports. Launched December 2022, the sub-campaign garnered positive feedback, prompting ORG to transition the entire initiative to "Pause Before You Play" in SFY24. The website, resources, and all other assets will go live in the first quarter of SFY24 and will include new toolkit assets that are translated in Spanish, Arabic, Russian, and Ukrainian.

Problem Gambling Helpline Promotion Campaign

Ohio for Responsible Gambling introduced two new components of the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline promotion campaign. With a focus on cultivating awareness through a data-centric approach, these collaborators engaged with clinicians and individuals in recovery to emphasize messages that would strongly connect with those confronting potential gambling-related issues. The campaign was inaugurated in late SFY22, featuring individuals who have been in long-term recovery. The message continued throughout SFY23 to align with the implementation and launch of sports gambling in Ohio.

"My name is Josh, and I am a gambling addict in recovery. I am a United States Army veteran. I did one tour in Iraq and two in Afghanistan. I didn't realize I had a gambling problem until I started stealing things, hiding things from friends and family; my gambling pushed them away. It's a vicious cycle, you get another paycheck, you gamble, you go home for a month. I just got to a point where I was just sick and tired of being sick and tired. I knew I needed help. I told my VA counselor about my gambling problem, and she gave me the gambling helpline. Talking to a trained professional that has been through training in the gambling field really helps a lot because you feel a connection to that person, and it's real, it feels so real. If you feel like you need help definitely call the gambling helpline-- someone cares..."

- Video Clip from the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline Campaign

College Football Stadium Sponsorship

To target one of the most at-risk demographics, 18-34-year-old males, ORG worked with Origo Branding to produce sponsored LED videos in college football stadiums across the state. The initiative included in-stadium messaging throughout various



locations such as the University of Akron, Bowling Green State University, University of Cincinnati, Kent State University, Ohio University, The Ohio State University, and University of Toledo stadiums. These collective efforts resulted in display ads for 42 home games, reaching 1,513,708 sports fans in attendance throughout the season from September 1st, 2022 – November 26th, 2022. Fans in attendance who engage in gambling were encouraged to set limits, recognize the risks, know when to stop, and to visit BeforeYouBet.org.

“Get Set Before You Bet” Campaign Performance Metrics

Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG) partners engaged with agency contractor Origo Branding to create and continuously update statewide media campaigns, as shown in the examples below. These adult and youth campaigns educate Ohioans on what responsible gambling looks like, how to prevent problem gambling and shares resources for helping those in need.

Campaign measures are gathered and assessed monthly and annually. On the figure to the right, performance measures with cumulative data are represented in the full span of the campaign.



REAL IMPACT FOR OHIO

State Fiscal Year 2023 Metrics

- Total Estimated Impressions: **61,578,462**
- Total Quizzes Taken: **4,400**
- Community Toolkit Visits: **2,787**
- Website Visits: **87,166**
- Page Views: **143,400**
- Digital and Social Media Impressions: **21,271,656**

Lifetime Campaign Totals:

- Total Estimated Impressions: 517,478,462
- Total Quizzes Taken: 67,988
- Community Toolkit Visits: 15,327
- Website Visits: 656,876
- Page Views: 11,290,788
- Life of Campaign Impressions: 39,268,933

Change the Game Ohio Youth Gambling Campaign

The Change the Game Ohio campaign is continually expanding to bring attention to the potentially harmful effects of traditional gambling and the virtual gambling embedded within gaming for children and adolescents. As with any potential addiction, the earlier people are introduced to the behavior or addictive substance, the more likely they are to develop problems as adults. The goal of *Change the Game Ohio* (CTGO) is to equip parents, educators, and youth on how to develop healthy relationships with technology, help adults understand the issues that youth are facing, and how to facilitate a conversation about gambling.

Through digital, cable and streaming TV, and radio advertising statewide, the CTGO campaign resulted in 9,780,375 impressions. New users to the [ChangeTheGameOhio.org](https://www.ChangeTheGameOhio.org) site increased by 57% and visits to the toolkit increased by 52.7% over the last year. The campaign also includes a toolkit of marketing materials that can be localized for community partners and educational fact sheets for specific audiences.



2022 Ohio Gambling Survey

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) and the Ohio for Responsible Gambling partners – the Ohio Casino Control Commission, Ohio Lottery Commission and Ohio State Racing Commission – have worked in concert since 2013 to ensure the highest quality Problem Gambling Services system of care for individuals and families. An important part of this process is understanding how Ohioans view and engage in gambling through the Ohio Gambling Surveys. The field work for the 2022 Ohio Gambling Survey was performed by The Ohio State University CHRR.

Take the survey at:

<http://go.chrr.osu.edu/GAMBLING/00XX00>

or scan the QR code,

or schedule a phone interview
(additional details on back).



**OHIO
GAMBLING
SURVEY**



The 2012 Survey allowed ORG to assess prevalence rates of gambling behavior and at-risk/problem gambling before the casino or racetrack-based "racinos" launched. The 2022 survey mirrored its predecessors in 2017 and 2012, giving the state an updated look at gambling prevalence and attitudes and allowed for a 10-year retrospective look since Ohio's 11 casino-style venues opened. Similarly, the 2022 survey will also provide a baseline prior to the launch of sports betting becoming legal in 2023. The 2022 survey was primarily conducted by sending respondents a postcard (as pictured above) that linked them to an online survey (via URL/QR Code) throughout the state's 50 board areas. The goal was to obtain 300 valid respondents from each board area and gather up to 15,000 responses; after review, the survey had received more than 14,500 valid responses from October through December 31, 2022. Survey data analysis was still under review at publication time.

OhioMHAS Reporting Updates and Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health (ADAMH) County Spending Guidelines Webinar

The Problem Gambling Network of Ohio and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services held a webinar in June 2023 to provide updated information for local behavioral health boards on what resources were available to help support Problem Gambling prevention and treatment programming. The session featured updates, including a new expenditure guide and training on an updated reporting form to help communities demonstrate their capacity, activities performed and how to accurately report outcomes for treatment. Each board was offered an opportunity for a consultation should they need further assistance on how to grow and/or develop problem gambling services in their community. Claire Spada of PGNO and Scott Anderson of OhioMHAS presented the webinar to 68 attendees.

FY 2023 Statewide Performance Measures

MEASURE	TOTAL							
Number reached by community-based prevention & responsible/problem gambling messages	- 61,578,462 Impressions - 4,440 Quizzes taken - 21,271,656 Social Media impressions in SFY23							
Number of organizations asking for custom assets or access to the Community Toolkits for Before You Bet/Pause Before You Play (August 2022 through June 2023)	54							
	SFY16	SFY17	SFY18	SFY19	SFY20	SFY21	SFY22	SFY23
Number who called PG Helpline	5,884	5,358	5,558	5,642	6,047	6,301	5,706	9,448
Number of Chat Calls	54	112	193	350	386	601	715	1,009
Number Screened	44,236	68,419	72,355	59,956	62,403	61,054	56,731	66,956
Number Treated	1,028	1,159	1,252	834	873	1,037	1,110	1,136

Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline 1-800-589-9966

Top Counties for Calls to the Helpline

COUNTY	HELPLINE CALLS	COUNTY	HELPLINE CALLS	COUNTY	HELPLINE CALLS
Cuyahoga	1,115	Lucas	112	Lake	63
Franklin	386	Butler	90	Trumbull	47
Hamilton	299	Mahoning	71	Warren	47
Summit	152	Stark	67	Portage	44
Montgomery	148	Lorain	67	Medina	43

Reasons for Calling the Helpline & Number of Callers

Information Services	6,406	Gambling Regulation	473
Guidance/Problem Solving	2,415	Gambling Self-exclusion	406
Lotteries ("Recreation")	1,084	Family/Friends Support Groups	63
Gambling Addiction/Counseling	958	Gambling Addictions Hotlines	28
Gambling Addiction Support Group	529	Suicide Prevention Hotlines	10

Types of Gambling Activity for Helpline Callers

Casino/Racino Slots	812	Video Gaming (VLTs)	37
Lottery Scratch-Offs	449	Horseshoe Betting	30
Casino/Racino Table Games	382	Keno	24
Daily Fantasy Sports	348	Bingo	17
Sports Betting	311	Pull Tabs	17
Lottery Games	247	Sweepstakes Cafes/Skill Game Arcades/Internet Cafes	17
Internet Gaming	183	Stocks	14
Cards/Dice (non-casino/racino)	56	Horseshoe Slots	9

Helpline Callers' Ages

17 & Under: 0.2%	18-24: 10.9%	25-34: 22.7%	35-44: 20.9%
45-54: 15.7%	55-64: 14.2%	65+: 15.4%	

Community Impact: Supporting Problem Gambling at the Local Level

Education and Skill Building Grant

Prevention Action Alliance concluded its second cycle of Education and Skill Building to Prevent Problem Gambling annual grants. These grants, aimed at enhancing community coalition capacity across Ohio, were distributed to five coalition partners across the state: Envision Partnerships, PreventionFIRST!, Recovery Resources, Wood County Prevention Coalition, and the Zepf Center.

Each organization undertook activities to address specific local issues in their respective communities. Some highlights include support for creating professional videos by each participant's agency, discussing the importance of addressing problem gambling in their communities, addressing workforce needs, engaging local stakeholders, and developing translated materials for specific vulnerable communities. The chart on the right summarizes the activities supported by these communities in SFY 2023.



Nabil Pervaiz, Manager of Prevention Services at Recovery Resources (Cleveland) discusses problem gambling issues in the community while participating in one activity for the Education and Skill Building grant.

REAL IMPACT FOR OHIO

Education & Skill Building Highlights in SFY 2023:

- 27 QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer) instructors trained to help their communities in suicide prevention
- 28,000 local views of professionally made videos for each community highlighting the importance of problem gambling prevention
- Supported staff to attend local, state and national conferences
- Translated problem gambling assets into Chinese and Nepali
- Increased staff training
- Support local Pause Before You Play campaigns
- Increased engagement with area stakeholders such as local government and civic organizations
- Adding problem gambling to a faith-based toolkit that includes training and resources
- Numerous forms of information dissemination about problem gambling

Pilot Gambling Program Launches in Cuyahoga County

The Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court launched a pilot specialty docket courts program for cases involving charges stemming from problem gambling in SFY23 to address the root cause of criminal activity by coordinating efforts of the judiciary, prosecution, treatment, mental health, and social services. Together, they maintain a critical balance of authority, supervision, support, and encouragement.

The goal of this pilot is to break the cycle of the "revolving door" syndrome and support participants toward problem gambling recovery, providing an opportunity for restitution and teaching them to become productive law-abiding citizens. This, in turn, reduces criminal recidivism and contributes to better, healthier communities. Probation staff are trained at least twice a year on problem gambling

signs, symptoms and screening. In the inaugural year of the docket, probation staff screened just over 1,000 individuals and referred 11 people to Recovery Resources, the local behavioral healthcare provider for assessment and needed care.

Regional Trainings

Prevention Action Alliance offered a series of regional trainings across Ohio to showcase the Pause Before You Play and Change the Game Ohio campaigns. The trainings aimed to promote prevention programs such as SMART Bet, Campus Cents, and Powered Up, and encouraged connections to organizations like the Statewide Prevention Coalition Association, Problem Gambling Network of Ohio, and the National Council on Problem Gambling. Each of these sessions was attended by members of Ohio for Responsible Gambling, who were able to address problem gambling topics that attendees were interested in, particularly related to sports betting. Three sessions were held in Akron, Bowling Green, and Dayton, with well over 30 participants each.

SFY 2024 Future Planning

With SFY23 now in the rearview mirror, we look ahead to the next fiscal year. The problem gambling field is full of opportunities and challenges. OhioMHAS, the Ohio Casino Control Commission, the Ohio Lottery Commission and the Ohio State Racing Commission are committed to adapting to the rapid changes in technology, service needs, and individuals' supports like apps to assist those affected by problem gambling in Ohio. We are excited about the work to come and remain dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of individuals and families in Ohio. The following are a few examples of focused work to look forward to in SFY24.



The Launch of the Ohio Gambling Telehealth Network

Accessing affordable, secure, and effective care has proven challenging for patients in both physical and behavioral health. And with the onset of sports wagering introducing fewer obstacles to wagering, players can now place bets discreetly on apps or computers. This may present challenges for responsible messaging and support to reach those who could benefit.

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, in collaboration with Ohio for Responsible Gambling, initiated a competitive request for proposals to find organizations to oversee and/or participate as clinical agencies in delivering telehealth care tailored to addressing problem gambling among Ohioans. The Problem Gambling Network of Ohio was awarded the project as the administering agency and will lead the newly named Ohio Gambling Telehealth Network (OGTN).

Serving as the initial clinical agency is the Zepf Center of Lucas County, which will work alongside other certified behavioral health agencies to build the network from a clinical platform. OGTN will integrate existing foundations of the current service system, such as the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline and the Warm Transfer Program, offering individuals who reach out for help an additional avenue for treatment in a seamless manner. The OGTN will primarily address gaps in access, where geographical limitations or stigma-related concerns may hinder nearby options. The program's soft launch occurred in April 2023, with full operational capacity expected by the third quarter of SFY24.

GamFin: An Online Resource for Problem Gambling Professionals

GamFin is an online community where mental health professionals can access financial training, counseling, and other support services to assist their clients in recovering from a gambling addiction. Often, behavioral health clinicians feel uncomfortable discussing finances with their clients. GamFin aims to educate and support mental health professionals continuously, empowering them to integrate financial solutions into treatment and recovery programs effectively, to better serve their clients. Through support from the Ohio Casino Control Commission, Ohio professionals working in the problem gambling field will have access to GamFin in SFY24.

“Two professionals teaming together is going to help so many more people and give them that hope to keep going.”

-Jody Bechtold, LCSW, ICGC, IGDC, PC on GamFin

Risky Business Modernization Project

The Dayton Urban Minority Alcohol and Drug Abuse Outreach Program will modernize the Risky Business program for the state of Ohio. Risky Business (RB) is a six-session holistic prevention intervention developed by the Substance Abuse Resources and Disability Issues (SARDI) Program in collaboration with Wright State University. The Risky Business curriculum consists of six one-hour sessions that guide at-risk youth, ages 13-17, through lessons focused on Decision Making, Violence, Gambling, Risky Sexual Behavior, Myths and Facts about Drugs and Alcohol, and Drug Prevention.

The program will undergo a timely update to make the curriculum more relevant to today's youth with at-risk characteristics and those young people in a universal population of adolescents. The newly updated modules will be tested with youth and evaluated for effectiveness before being re-distributed statewide.

Powered Up

Powered Up, an online learning opportunity for children ages 10–18 and the adults in their lives, will provide educational resources on video gaming behaviors in SFY24. Comprised of two distinct courses, one for children and one for adults, Powered Up and Prevention Action Alliance will be offering these courses at no cost statewide in September 2023. Each course, about two hours in length, will explore healthy gaming behaviors, setting healthy limits, and will help adults better understand gaming culture.

In Loving Memory: Dr. Amanda Burke

Ohio lost a true champion in the field of problem gambling with the passing of Dr. Amanda Burke. Amanda had joint appointments as Associate Professor at Kent State University and Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) Problem Gambling Prevention Specialist at Townhall II. She sought out



opportunities to connect systems and to build awareness of problem gambling, with one example being her work and outreach with the child welfare and foster care networks.

In addition to numerous committees and trainings, Amanda was an inaugural member of the Ohio Problem Gambling Advisory Board, an instrumental contributor to the Ohio Gambling Survey for the past 10 years and has long served on the Prevention Committee for the National Council on Problem Gambling, where she chaired the Social Media and Communications subcommittee for many years. As mentioned in the report earlier, Amanda was posthumously awarded the 2023 Jim Wuelfing Award for prevention by the National Council on Problem Gambling.