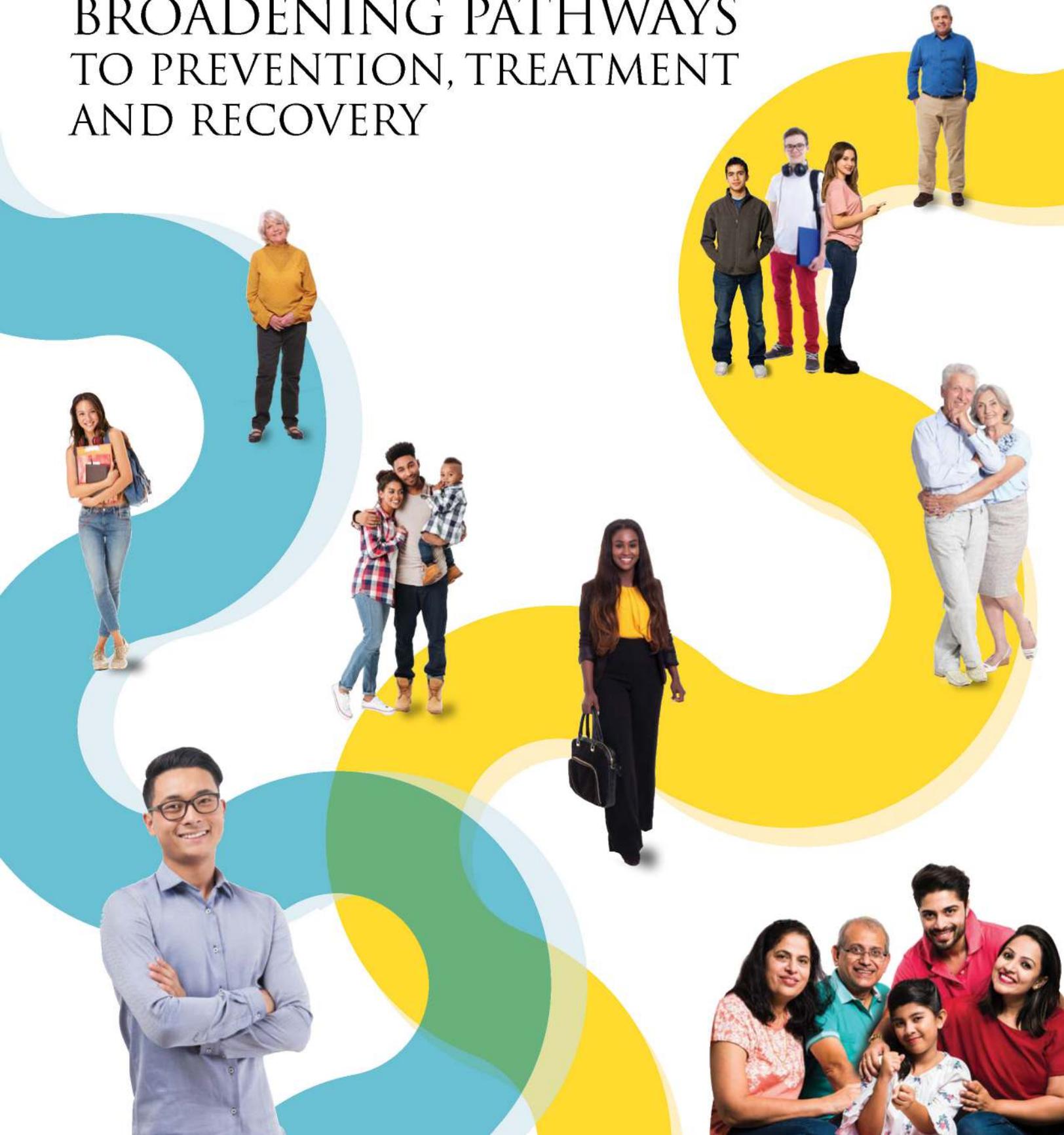


The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

# BROADENING PATHWAYS TO PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND RECOVERY



## CENTER STAFF

**Christopher Welsh, MD**

*Medical Director*

*UMSOM Faculty*

**Robert K. White, LCPC**

*Director of External Affairs and  
Business Development*

**Mary Drexler, MSW**

*Program Director*

**J. Kathleen Tracy, PhD**

*Director of Research*

*UMSOM Faculty*

**Teresa E. Yates**

*Business Operations Director, Research Services*

**Kenneth Crawford, CPRS**

*Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist*

**Donna Gaspar**

*Communications Manager*

**Heather Eshleman, MPH**

*Prevention Manager*

**Michele Lewis, MEd, LCADC, ICGC I**

*Clinical Manager*

**Tsion Girmay, MPH**

*Clinical Research Specialist*

**William Hinman, CPRS, CCAR**

*Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist*

**Davene Hinton**

*Program Assistant*

**Blair Inniss, JD, MA**

*Government Relations Coordinator*

**Carrie Jenkins, CPRS, ICRC, RPS, PRST**

*Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist*

**Carin Miller, PRS**

*Peer Recovery Support Specialist*

**Jody Van Order**

*Business Manager*

**Kenneth Wolfson, CPRS, RPS**

*Certified Peer Recovery Support Specialist*

**Lori Rugle, PhD, ICGC II**

*Consultant*

*UMSOM Faculty*



## CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	2
History and Context .....	4
Public Awareness .....	5
Treatment and Intervention Services .....	9
Peer Recovery Support .....	14
Training and Education .....	15
Prevention .....	17
Public Policy .....	19
Research .....	20
Future Directions .....	22

*Funded by*



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Although the last half of fiscal year (FY) 2020 was impacted by operational challenges due to Federal and State restrictions around a worldwide pandemic, the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (the Center) remained opened and committed to providing real-time support, help, and hope to all Maryland residents. In FY2020, the Center increased engagement with mental health/behavioral health providers, private practitioners and other organizations, expanded its Peer Recovery Support program for problem gambling, further developed the Prevention Program, and grew public awareness and outreach initiatives.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Center continued to expand its public awareness and outreach in FY2020, recording a 4% increase in all activities over FY2019. Over 8,900 individuals and organizations across all efforts “had a conversation” with Center staff and over 67,100 materials were distributed. In addition, 1,217 mental health/behavioral health organizations, private practitioners, preventionists, and other community organizations were engaged in all 24 jurisdictions. New outreach initiatives were developed that focus on Maryland public libraries and senior centers to increase community awareness through distribution of materials and in-person/virtual presentations.

## TREATMENT AND INTERVENTION SERVICES

In FY2020, the provision of “no cost treatment” to Maryland residents for problem gambling, regardless of insurance or income status, continued as part of the collaboration between the Center, the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Beacon Health Options (through December 31, 2019), and Optum Maryland (beginning January 1, 2020). To further the integration of treatment services, the Center reached out to 377 organizations and private practitioners in the behavioral health field, with 47% being contacted in FY2020 as the means to increase the capability for treatment for problem gambling. At the end of FY2020, 101 providers and private practitioners offering “no cost treatment” were listed on the Center’s Provider Referral Directory covering 20 jurisdictions.

## PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT

In its third year, the Center’s Peer Recovery Support Program for problem gambling helped widen the doorways of entry into treatment and recovery for individuals to limit, control, or stop their gambling. By the conclusion of FY2020, the Program expanded to five Peer Recovery Support Specialists providing additional support to help seekers within every Maryland region. The Peers assisted 145 new clients, 89% of whom entered clinical counseling. In addition, the Peers conducted 174 presentations to recovery groups and participated in 29 community events, interacting with over 4,000 Maryland residents.

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The Center is committed to building the capacity of mental health, substance use and other health care and prevention providers through training and education to address gambling awareness and problem gambling/gambling addiction treatment and recovery. In FY2020, 2,290 total participants from every jurisdiction in Maryland attended, in-person or virtually, one or more of the 34 clinical training and educational programs conducted by the Center. The Center developed and launched the Disordered Gambling Fellowship Program (Fellowship Program) to expand its capability of clinical outreach and training; nine “no cost treatment” providers participated in the program completing 45 hours of clinical training and supervision.

## PREVENTION

The goal of the Center's Prevention Program is to collaborate with local health departments, treatment and prevention providers, schools, law enforcement, social service organizations, community-based health centers, and other organizations to educate and implement appropriate prevention policies and practices to address problem gambling using the public health model. In FY2020, the Center's Prevention Program focused on capacity building, expanding the number of special population and youth grants awarded to 16. Through these grant efforts, 39 awareness and prevention projects were completed, reaching 8,256 people and distributing over 14,089 awareness materials.

## PUBLIC POLICY

Public policy is the process by which governments translate their political vision into programs and actions to deliver desired changes in the real world. To that end, the Center, in concert with the Legal Resource Center for Public Health Policy and the Public Health Law Clinic at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law, broadened their focus to include increased engagement with the community and industry in addition to continuing to actively scan public policy issues arising in Maryland around responsible and problem gambling. While continuing to work with behavioral health partners, the Center increased engagement with legal organizations, especially those that work with mental health problem solving courts. In addition, the Legal Resource Center designed and distributed fact sheets to legislators to ensure problem gambling remained in relevant conversations with key stakeholders.

## RESEARCH

The goal of the Research Program on Gambling is to implement a research agenda that: informs our understanding of gambling behavior; monitors the impact of gambling on the population; and identifies evidence-based approaches to mitigate any harmful impacts of gambling. In FY2020, the Research Program advanced its research agenda with a continued focus on the identification and prevention of problem gambling behavior and attendant consequences for public health.



# HISTORY AND CONTEXT

Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 was the eighth year of operation of the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (the Center). The Center is part of the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Department of Psychiatry, with its Research Division located within the Department of Epidemiology and Public Health.

**MISSION:** The Center promotes healthy and informed choices regarding gambling and problem gambling through public awareness, training and education, prevention, technical assistance to the behavioral health care system, peer recovery support, research, and public policy. It does so by working closely with appropriate state stakeholders and bringing together experts from a variety of disciplines including psychiatry, medicine, epidemiology, social work, law, and others.

The Center began operation on July 1, 2012 to help address the expansion of legal gambling availability within Maryland. Legislation authorizing this expansion also provided for a problem gambling fund to be established and administered by the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration (BHA). The fund was designated to provide support for problem gambling research, public awareness, training, helpline services and prevention.

The primary goal of the Center is to minimize the risks and problems associated with gambling in the State of Maryland. In FY2020, ongoing outreach to behavioral health providers and private practitioners to engage in the State's "no cost" treatment program for problem gamblers and their families/significant others increased for a second straight year, and reported a 16% increase over FY2019.

A new initiative, the Disordered Gambling Fellowship Program (Fellowship Program) was launched in FY2020 to expand the Center's capability of clinical outreach and training. Nine Maryland clinicians completed over 45 hours of clinical training and interactive group consultation meetings. The Fellowship Program is viewed as the starting point for supporting clinicians, preventionists and educators to enhance their capacity to provide evidence-based training and professional supervision in the field of problem and responsible gambling.

The Center, with support and funding from BHA, continued to build its Gambling Peer Recovery Support Specialist services, increasing the number of Peer Recovery Support Specialists to five and expanding the capability in the western region and Eastern Shore. In FY2020, the Peer Recovery Support program engaged with 145 new individuals, 89% of whom entered clinical counseling.

The Center's Prevention Program continued its expansion of prevention initiatives in FY2020, engaging with key Maryland stakeholders, such as the Maryland Chapter of the National Alliance for Mental illness (NAMI), the Maryland Association of Prevention Professionals and Advocates (MAPPA), My Life Foundation, Inc, and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD). In addition, the Prevention Program began the process of conducting focus groups and key interviews to study knowledge and perspectives of underage and problem gambling in Maryland.

## Key Center Accomplishments FY2020

Awareness across all efforts reached over **8,900** individuals and organizations, distributing over **67,100** materials.

Initial outreach conducted to **176** agencies, providers and organizations across the state.

Peer Support specialists increased to five Peers and **145** new clients were assisted.

**2,290** total participants attended **34** in-person/virtual clinical trainings and educational programs.

A total of **16** Prevention grants awarded with **39** projects completed, reaching **8,256** residents.

**Active monitoring** of public policy issues around responsible and problem gambling

Research analytical support of the Center's key initiatives with **evidence-based approaches**.

# PUBLIC AWARENESS

The Center's public awareness efforts remain a key focus to promote responsible gambling and reduce the stigma of problem gambling by informing Marylanders of help and treatment resources that are available to decrease any harm that gambling may be creating in their lives. Collaboration with strategic partnerships expanded awareness within communities through outreach initiatives to public libraries and senior centers. Although in-person contact was limited and large events prohibited in the last half of the year due to federal and state mandated pandemic guidelines, FY2020 awareness across all efforts (training, presentations, prevention, events, etc.) reached over 8,900 individuals and organizations within Maryland and distributed over 67,100 awareness materials.

## GENERAL AWARENESS AND OUTREACH

With the expansion of Peer Support Specialists and Prevention initiatives, awareness distribution and outreach continued to increase. In FY2020, 1,217 mental health/behavioral health organizations, private practitioners, preventionists, and other community organizations were engaged in all 24 jurisdictions through a prevention, treatment, and/or recovery focus. Of this outreach, 14% (n=176) were recorded as newly engaged in FY2020 within their communities to promote responsible gambling awareness and problem gambling resources for treatment and recovery.

General awareness messaging continues to promote the Maryland Helpline 1-800-GAMBLER; No Cost Treatment to Maryland Residents; and Peer Recovery Support for problem gambling. At the end of FY2020, over 6,600 Maryland residents received awareness materials through Peer recovery presentations and community events.

Continuing in the role of content experts for problem gambling messaging, the Center developed *Public Awareness Policy for the Use of Gambling Imagery* in responsible gambling messaging. This policy resource is freely offered to organizations and is posted on the Center's website. Research studies have demonstrated that the use of visual cues/imageries (i.e., images of cards, slot machines, etc.) can be a potential trigger to re-engage in problematic gambling behavior.

## TARGETED AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

State and national awareness campaigns are a significant component of the Center's awareness activities, and include specific messaging for web postings, social media messaging, directed email communications and flyers/posters for distribution online and within communities.

### March 2020 – Problem Gambling Awareness Month

This annual grassroots public awareness and outreach campaign, a key awareness initiative for the Center each year, was created and sponsored by the National Council on Problem Gambling to educate the general public and health care professionals about the warning signs of problem gambling and to raise awareness about the help and resources available within the state.

**No Cost Treatment Now Available for Anyone Wanting Help for a Gambling Problem**

Counseling for gambling problems at no cost to Maryland residents is now available for anyone seeking help regardless of insurance coverage, financial status, or ability to pay.

Funding through the Problem Gambling Fund managed by the Maryland Department of Health's Behavioral Health Administration supports this effort to remove the barriers to treatment for anyone with a gambling disorder.

You can receive help for a gambling problem without adding any additional financial burden to your life.

Call, text or chat today for a list of counselors approved to provide no cost treatment for you or someone you know.

If you or any one you know is gambling problematically or struggling with gambling addiction, call, text or chat **1-800-GAMBLER** (1-800-426-2537) or visit [www.helpmygamblingproblem.org](http://www.helpmygamblingproblem.org)

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
The Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling

Maryland



In FY2020, this campaign had to be adapted to online distribution with pandemic restrictions being implemented in the second week of the month. Even with these restrictions, campaign outreach met or exceeded efforts from FY2019:

- Over 7,200 awareness materials (flyers, brochures, items with helpline number) were distributed in March.
- E-marketing campaign, including web links, was created and distributed to over 2,500 Maryland behavioral health professionals.
- The Center Staff exhibited “back of house” at the Casino at Ocean Downs and had the conversation about gambling and problem gambling with over 60 casino staff.
- Beginning late February and conducted mostly virtually, the Center exhibited, presented, and trained 1,474 providers and residents in 20 events/programs.
- In partnership with the Maryland Lottery Responsible Gambling Program, the reuse of the Center’s public service announcements (PSAs) ran on radio (2,441 spots) and local television channels (910 spots) throughout the state during the month of March. In addition, 3,593 digital billboard spots were placed.

### Additional Annual Awareness Campaigns

Annual/National campaigns provide the Center an opportunity to increase knowledge on that campaign topic and/or a special population through the development and distribution of a variety of campaign-centric communications as it relates to responsible gambling and /or gambling disorder.

In FY2020, targeted problem gambling awareness around monthly campaigns included, but was not limited to: (September) *National Recovery Month, Suicide Prevention Awareness*; (November) *Veterans Awareness Month*; (January) *Older Adults, Teen Gambling*; (February) *Sports Betting* (‘Big Game,’ March Madness); (April/May) *Keeping the Health and Balance in Your Life*; (June) *Have a conversation with someone who has been there*.

In-depth awareness guides were developed for three awareness months: December for the Lottery Holiday Campaign/Underage Gambling; March for Problem Gambling Awareness Month; and May for Mental Health Month. A combined total of over 1200 guides were distributed, in person and virtually, to behavioral health providers, preventionists and public information officers. These 15-page guides provided ideas for promoting themed awareness, tools to develop prevention messaging, and resources to actively distribute awareness within communities.

## COMMUNITY EVENTS AND AWARENESS

The Center continues to work collaboratively through outreach efforts with key stakeholders and community partners within Maryland to facilitate and support community/awareness events around prevention, treatment, and recovery themes for dissemination of resources and materials.

### Center Sponsored Activities

The Center staff interacted with over 4,894 Marylanders at 31 events in 11 jurisdictions, having one-on-one conversations about responsible gambling, gambling peer recovery support, and “no cost treatment” now available for individuals and their families.

**Have the Conversation**  
with someone who has been there...

This MARCH, during *Problem Gambling Awareness Month*, take the action to call and have a conversation with a *Peer Recovery Support Specialist* who can help you or a loved one navigate resources and remove barriers on the road to recovery from gambling problems.

**PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH**  
→ AWARENESS • ACTION

**If gambling is causing problems for you or any one you know, call the Helpline 1-800-GAMBLER today and ask to speak with a Peer Recovery Support Specialist.**

For most, gambling can be fun. But for some, gambling can get out of control. A Peer Recovery Specialist can help individuals seeking to limit, control or stop their gambling, and connect them to treatment and other useful resources in their communities so they continue to work toward their goals in dealing with any gambling problems.

Begin the conversation today and start on the road to recovery.

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE  
The Maryland Center of Excellence  
in Problem Gambling



### Faith-Based Awareness

The Center, in collaboration with the Maryland Council on Problem Gambling (MCPG), continued outreach efforts to faith and spiritual communities as “first time responders” in supporting individuals, families, and communities in their understanding of low and high risk gambling; increasing public awareness about problem gambling and the resources for treatment and peer recovery; and expanding awareness to health and wholeness ministries they lead.

MCPG awarded one small awareness grant in FY2020 to Essex United Methodist Church in Baltimore County. The grant supported the Church’s development of a responsible gambling center and their ability to support those in the community dealing with food insecurity. Over 450 recyclable grocery bags filled with food donations were distributed to community residents.



### Maryland Public Library Outreach Initiative

To further expand outreach within communities, the Center staff contacted local libraries in all 24 jurisdictions to establish an avenue for display and distribution of awareness materials. Over 9,100 awareness materials were delivered and put on display in 134 library branches across the state.

### Senior Center Outreach

In collaboration with the Center’s Prevention Program, the Center’s Peer staff outreached to county Departments of Aging to introduce the Center’s resources.



In addition, the Peers contacted community senior centers to begin a conversation of responsible gambling since many senior centers offer bus trips to casinos. A 60-minute interactive presentation with targeted awareness materials was designed to share the risks

of gambling, tips on how to keep gambling responsible and safe, and the resources available for help if gambling behaviors become a problem. The Peers engaged with 11 senior centers in six jurisdictions (Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Frederick, Prince George’s, Queen Anne’s, Worcester counties), and scheduled six presentations to over 200 participants.

### PRINTED MATERIALS AND GIVEAWAYS

The Center continued to develop and freely distribute awareness materials (flyers, posters, rack cards, etc.) at no cost. The Center maintains a resource library with online materials as well as printed brochures which are distributed within training programs, presentations, and at community events. In addition, promotional items were distributed with the Maryland Helpline number (1-800-GAMBLER) and the help seeker website [helpmygamblingproblem.org](http://helpmygamblingproblem.org). In FY2020, over 67,100 awareness materials were distributed.



## ELECTRONIC MEDIA

### Websites

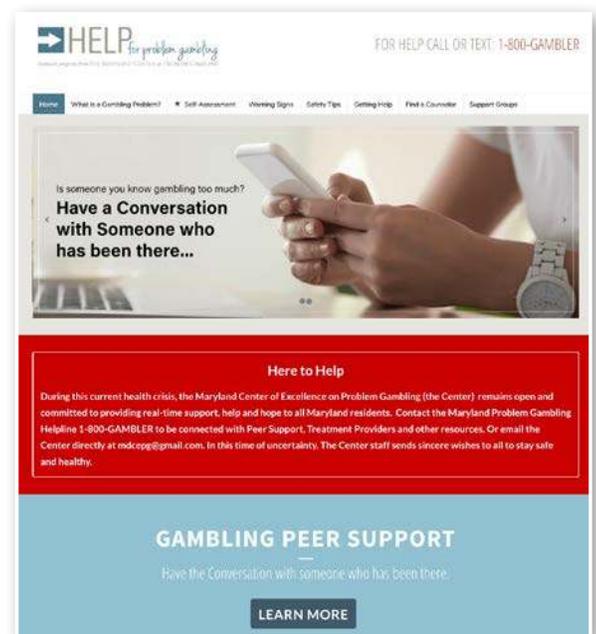
Total web traffic in FY2020 recorded over 381,000 visits and received 96 chat/texts from individuals and family members seeking help. The help seeker website URL, [helpmygamblingproblem.org](http://helpmygamblingproblem.org), is utilized on all awareness materials and offers a quick source of information, including a self-assessment test and an interactive counselor list to connect to no cost treatment. The main repository for the Center's resources, [mdproblemgambling.com](http://mdproblemgambling.com), continues to be a key reference for providers and organizations. The Center initiated a new agreement with a web management service at the end of FY2020 to further enhance the capability and usability of the websites.

### Public Service Announcements and Documentaries

The Center maintains a library of over 55 PSAs that encompass a variety of awareness messaging focused on topic, age group, special population, and/or lottery/scratch-off play, as well as "no cost counseling now available" messaging. These PSAs are used in presentations as learning tools, distributed by the Maryland Lottery for March awareness, and hosted on the Center's website.

The Center also maintains three documentaries: *Understanding Joy: The Devastation of Gambling Addiction* (30 minutes); *The Gambling Connection to Opiate Use: Personal Experiences* (15 minutes); and *Glenn's Gamble: A Marine's Battle for Gambling Recovery* (25 minutes). In FY2020, over 100 DVD copies were distributed to organizations free of charge.

The Maryland Department of Health and Maryland Public Television, in collaboration with the Center, ran a series of radio spots beginning mid-February, focusing on the tag line *If you think gambling is a solution, it may be a problem*. As a result, help seeker calls in February increased 18% over the previous month.



## MEDIA INTERVIEWS

As content experts, the Center is occasionally contacted for information and guidance on gambling and problem gambling within Maryland. In FY2020, the Center's Program Director engaged in four interviews with media on topics ranging from general information on gambling and problem gambling, proposed legislative bills on sports betting, and mandated education on problem gambling in Maryland high schools.

# TREATMENT AND INTERVENTION SERVICES

During FY2020, the Center reached out to 176 new agencies, organizations and providers to increase the capability of treatment for problem gambling. The Peer Recovery Support Program assisted 145 new individuals in FY2020 seeking support and resources to limit, control or stop their problem gambling; of this number, 89% (n=129) were referred to treatment.

## IMPROVING THE PROVISION OF NO-COST TREATMENT FOR GAMBLING PROBLEMS

In FY2020, the program to reimburse behavioral health providers and private practitioners for provision of “no cost treatment” to Maryland residents for problem gambling, regardless of insurance or income status, continued as part of the collaboration between the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Beacon Health Options (through December 31, 2019), Optum (beginning January 1, 2020) and the Center. This reimbursement continues to include out-patient and residential services for both the gambler and/or concerned others.



Providers / Private Practitioners  
Can Be Reimbursed for  
Problem Gambling Services

### Referral into Treatment

A total of 308 help seekers (individuals and family members) were referred in FY2020 to “no cost treatment” providers on the Center’s Problem Gambling Referral Directory. Referrals to a treatment provider from the Maryland Helpline comprised 58% (n=179) of total referrals, with 17% as “real-time” warm transfers to the provider. The Center’s Peer Recovery Support Specialists referred a total of 129 help seekers (42%) to treatment providers with 70% (n=90) making appointments with providers and 54% (n=70) confirmed to attend at least the first treatment session.

### Court Mandated Referrals for Screening and Assessment

In FY2019, the Center, in collaboration with the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency, began educational outreach to Maryland Courts and state’s attorneys as a way of intervening in the cycle of criminal behavior to provide early intervention for individuals identified as having gambling problems. To support this educational outreach, a one-page handout was created that highlighted how gambling interacts with the legal system, what courts can do for intervention, and resources for addressing problem gambling behavior.

The first Court mandated referrals were received in August 2019. Courts direct an individual to contact the Center and be connected to Peer Support for referral to a provider on the Center’s Problem Gambling Provider Referral Directory. In FY2020, the Center received 18 court referrals.

## INTEGRATED INTERVENTION APPROACHES FOR COMMUNITIES

In FY2020, the Center’s staff reached out to, and collaborated with, over 440 agencies, organizations, and private practitioners to provide technical assistance for addressing and integrating problem gambling awareness, prevention, and treatment strategies into existing protocols. In addition, the Center’s clinical staff interacted with over 370 treatment providers and clinicians as a means of increasing the capability to provide no cost treatment for problem gambling through Maryland’s Problem Gambling Reimbursement program, to evaluate needs, and to implement training strategies to increase capability.

## RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING COLLABORATION AND VOLUNTARY EXCLUSION PROGRAM (VEP)

The Center continued its participation in the Maryland Alliance for Responsible Gambling (MARG). MARG, a statewide partnership for responsible gambling, sponsored by the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (MLGCA), continued to address ways to minimize the potential harm that may arise from gambling behavior and coordinate resources to address problem gambling in Maryland. The Alliance members, meeting quarterly, include representatives from MGLCA, Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration (BHA), Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, Maryland State Senate, Maryland House of Delegates, Maryland Council on Problem Gambling, Maryland's six casinos, and other interested nonprofit organizations serving individuals with gambling addiction. MARG meetings were limited in FY2020 due to pandemic restrictions and the ability to meet in-person.

The Maryland Voluntary Exclusion Program (VEP), operated by MLGCA, is available as an effective self-assessment tool for individuals who find themselves at-risk in any of the Maryland gaming venues (six Maryland casinos, six of Maryland's largest Bingo Halls, and the Maryland Lottery). The Center continued to work collaboratively with the MLGCA to incorporate up-to-date resource information/materials for the problem gambler or concerned other during their VEP application process.

Individuals who seek removal from the VEP program, after their initial two years are over, are required to complete a Healthy Lifestyle Choices Workbook, designed as a self-assessment tool. In FY2016, in collaboration with MLGCA and the Maryland Department of Health, the VEP removal process integrated a direct connection through the Center to a treatment provider at no cost to Maryland residents as a strategy for harm reduction of gambling behaviors. In FY2020, a total of 116 referrals from MLGCA were received by the Center. Of these referrals, 85% were Maryland residents and were referred to a counselor for VEP workbook review at no cost. In addition, 15% of referrals were out-of-state residents who completed this process at cost.



## MARYLAND PROBLEM GAMBLING PROVIDER REFERRAL DIRECTORY

A main priority for the Center is to continue to connect help seekers with resources to treatment and recovery within their communities. The Maryland Problem Gambling Provider Referral Directory (the Provider Directory) is maintained and updated by the Center on a monthly basis and utilized as a referral source for callers to Maryland's Problem Gambling Helpline, 1-800-GAMBLER. In addition, an interactive referral directory is also available on the Center's help seeker website – [helpmygamblingproblem.org](http://helpmygamblingproblem.org).

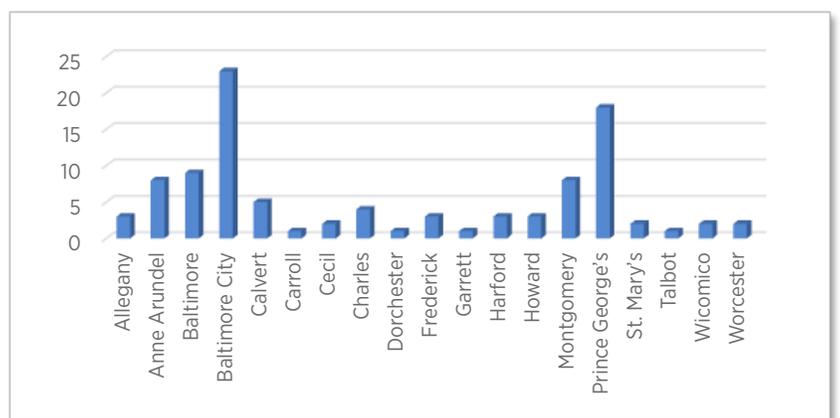


Figure 1: Provider Referral List by Jurisdiction

At the end of FY2020, a total of 101 providers, all offering “no cost treatment” for individuals and families, were listed on the Center's Provider List, representing 20 jurisdictions in Maryland, including the six casino jurisdictions (Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Cecil, Prince George's, and Worcester). (See Figure 1). The Center

outreached to 176 new organizations and private practitioners for inclusion on the Provider Directory and to expand the capability and accessibility of treatment throughout the state.

### HELPLINE 1.800.GAMBLER

Help seeker outreach (calls, texts and chats) in FY2020 recorded a total volume of 388, a 19% decrease over FY2019 (n=474). Of this total volume, help seeker calls represented 75% (n=292) and texts/chats represented 25% (n=96). This decrease in help seeker calls may be attributed to mandated closures of casinos and bingo halls in mid-March in direct response to federal and state in-person restrictions in response to the worldwide pandemic.

### Helpline Caller Characteristics and Demographics

In FY2020, helpline callers were reported from all 24 jurisdictions, showing expanded resources in Garrett, Kent and Somerset counties from the previous fiscal year (See Figure 2). Callers in the East Region (Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester counties) increased 3% relative percentage over FY2019 reported calls.

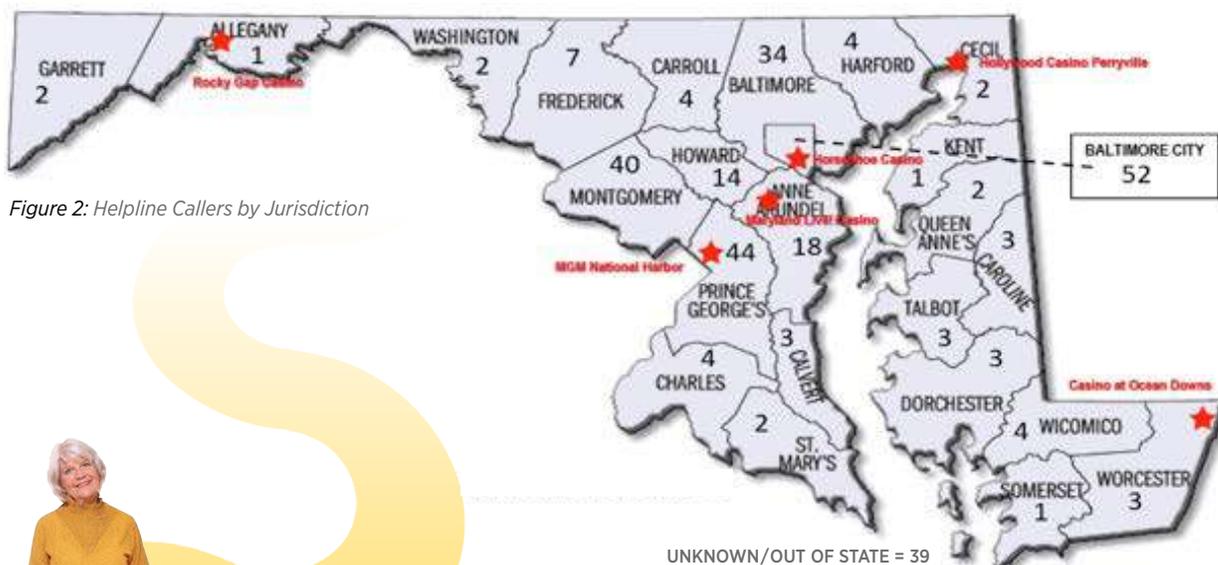


Figure 2: Helpline Callers by Jurisdiction



**Gender**

Although male callers continue to exceed female callers, FY2020 saw an increase in relative percentage of female callers (4%). (See Figure 3)

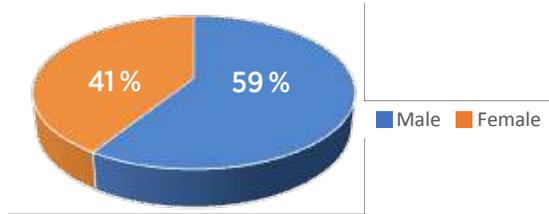


Figure 3: Gender by Percentage

**Caller Age**

In FY2020, callers in age group 45-54 recorded the highest relative percentage of callers. Callers in age group 25-34 recorded the highest increase (4%) over FY2019 recorded calls. (See Figure 4)

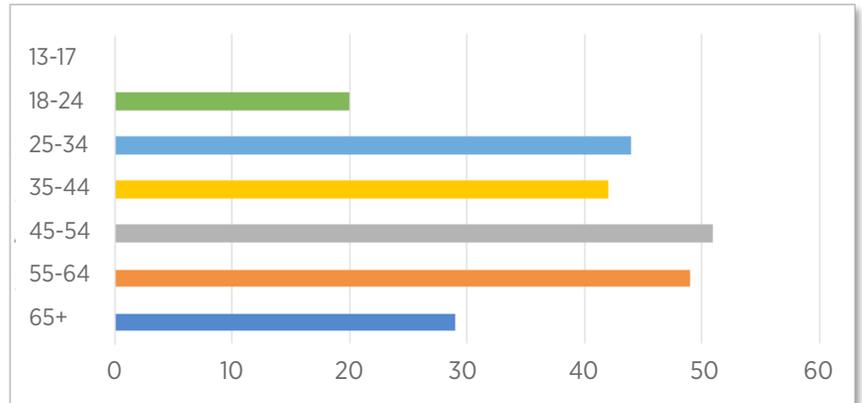


Figure 4: Number of Helpline Callers by Age Group

**Primary Gambling Problem**

Casino slots continue to be the primary gambling problem reported by Helpline callers representing 45% of total callers (See Figure 5). Lottery and scratch-offs were identified at 16% by help seekers, increasing 7% over FY2019. 12% of callers chose not to share their choice of gambling activity. (See Figure 5)

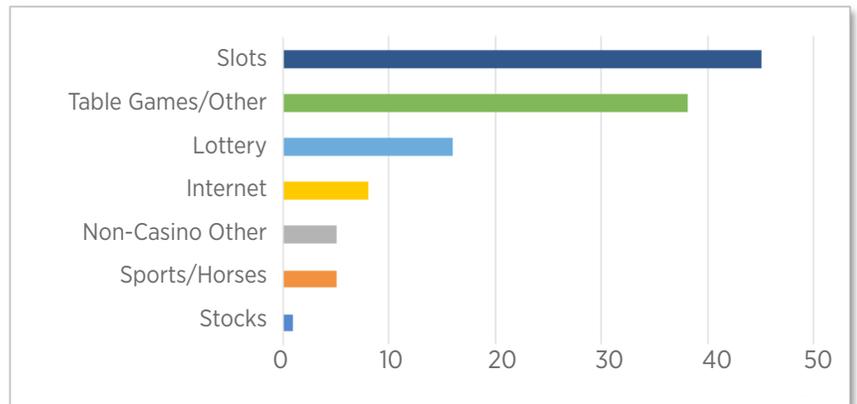


Figure 5: Primary Gambling Problem by Percentage

**Caller Ethnicity**

European Americans continued to comprise the majority of Helpline callers (48%) in FY2020. African American callers remained consistent with FY2019 (35%). Asian American callers increased slightly in FY2020 (1%). (See Figure 6)

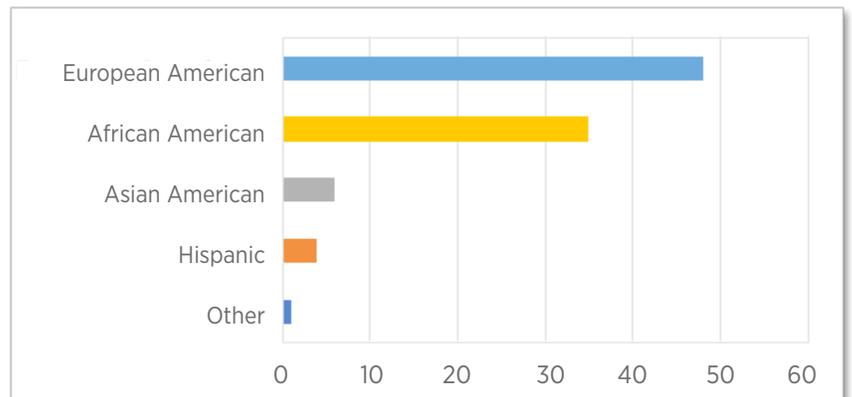


Figure 6: Percentage of Helpline Callers by Ethnicity

**Primary Source of Helpline Number**

Internet (45%) was the primary source for connecting Maryland residents to the Helpline, increasing in FY2020 7% over FY2019. As a result of the public awareness media campaign conducted by the Maryland Department of Health in collaboration with Maryland Public Television in late February/March, there was an increase in callers reporting awareness of the helpline through TV commercials (1%) and Radio spots (3%). Helpline callers also reported an increase (2%) in knowledge of the helpline through lottery and scratch off tickets. 14% of callers were unwilling to share information. (See Figure 7)

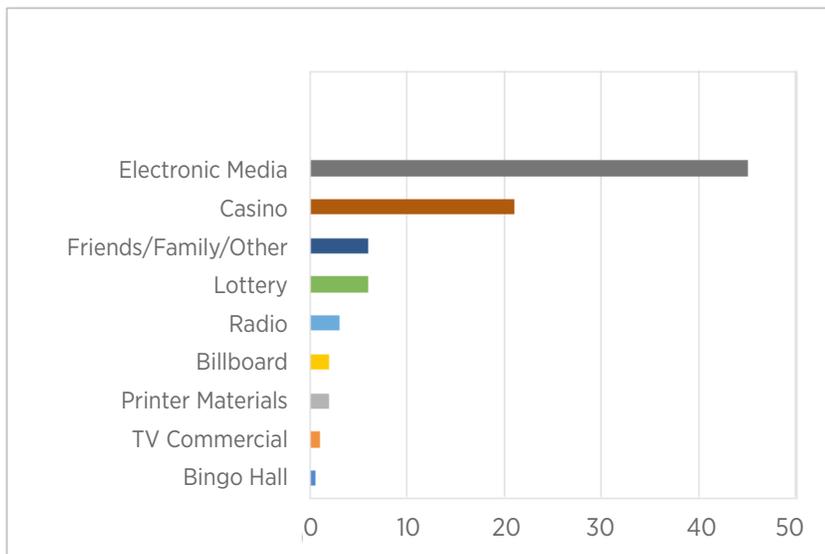


Figure 7: Where Callers Learned of Helpline by Percentage

**Who is Calling**

The majority of the calls to the Helpline in FY2020 were gamblers, representing 79% of total help seeker calls and recording a 4% increase over FY2019. (See Figure 8)

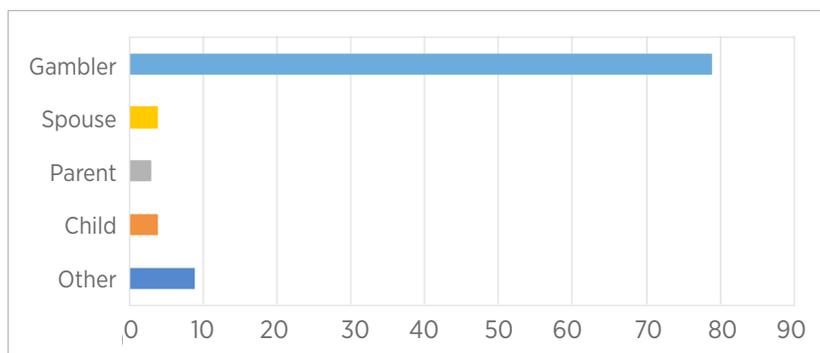


Figure 8: Person Who is Calling by Percentage

**Helpline Caller Referrals**

Referrals were given to 92% of helpline callers (n=270), with many receiving multiple referrals. In FY2020, warm transfers (real-time transfers with callers on the line) were implemented to treatment providers and peer support allowing for immediate connection for help. The majority of referrals 66% (n=179) of callers were referred to a treatment provider offering no cost treatment, with 17% of those callers being warm transferred. Requests for Peer support (both individual and Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) support) represented a total of 67% (n=180) with 59% of those callers being warm transferred for immediate peer support. (See Figure 9)

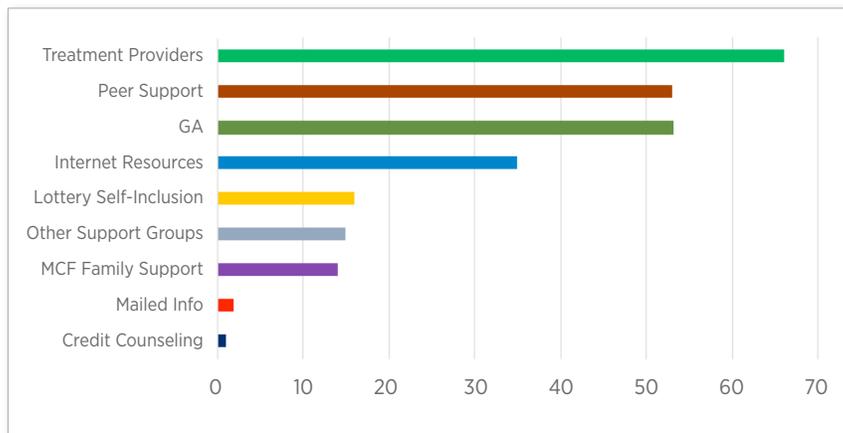


Figure 9: Helpline Caller Referrals

# PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT

In FY2020, The Center's Problem Gambling Peer Recovery Support Program expanded to a total of five Peer Specialists, 60% of those Certified through the Maryland Addiction and Behavioral Health Professional Certification Board (MABPCB). The Center's Peers have lived experience in recovery and are well-trained in assisting those seeking help with gambling behavior. With this experience, the Peers assisted 145 new clients, connecting them to resources to limit, control, or stop their gambling behavior. In addition, the Peers conducted 174 presentations to recovery groups and participated in 29 community events, interacting with over 4,000 Maryland residents.

## HELP SEEKERS SERVED

Peers received referrals to individuals seeking support for their gambling problems from the Center's Helpline, community behavioral health providers, and private practitioners. A total of 287 calls were referred to the Center for peer support throughout the year, with a total of 325 individuals classified as active status within the database.

In FY2020, 145 new clients were actively served by Center Peers and referred to treatment and resources, many receiving multiple referrals. Of these calls, 89% (n=129) were referred to "no cost treatment" providers, with 54% (n=70) attending at least the first treatment session. Referral data also tracked other referrals such as Gamblers Anonymous (GA) (90%), Maryland Lottery Self-Inclusion Program (VEP) (70%), Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) (30%), financial services (13%), and legal services (8%). (See *Figure 10*)



## PEER AGENCY/COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In FY2020, Peers provided outreach to 124 agencies and organizations across Maryland not previously engaged with the Center to: provide awareness of the Center and its resources; connect with existing peer support specialists located within their treatment delivery system; offer assistance within their client base and community; and provide resources for those identified as having a problem gambling disorder.

A significant aspect of Peer outreach is collaborating with organizations to present personal stories of addiction and recovery, as well as share definitions of gambling, its risks, and the resources available for support if gambling behavior becomes a problem. Peer staff participated in 174 presentations across Maryland in FY2020, reaching 2,340 individuals. Peers also participated in 29 community events across the state, interacting with over 1,700 individuals offering general information on responsible gambling and resources available for problem gambling, including Peer Support.

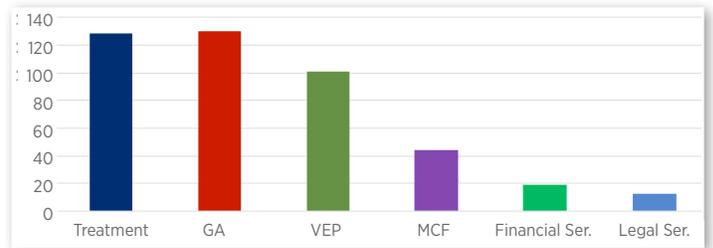


Figure 10: Peer Referrals to Support Services

## COLLABORATION WITH THE MARYLAND COALITION OF FAMILIES (MCF)



The Center continued its partnership with the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) to ensure support for the family members who are faced with the negative consequences created by a gambler's out-of-control gambling behavior. This expansion of services to include problem gambling within MCF began in 2018 and builds on MCF's history of supporting families with other behavioral health needs. In FY2020, a total of 82 help seekers were referred to MCF for family support, with 46% of referrals (n=38) directed from the Maryland Helpline. The remaining 54% (n=44) were direct referrals from the Center Peers as they worked collaboratively on a one-on-one basis with the MCF liaison to provide support of family members.



# TRAINING AND EDUCATION

In FY2020, outreach through clinical training and education programs across the state continues to be a key initiative for the Center. These programs build the capacity to prevent, address, and treat problem gambling/gambling disorder among mental health, substance use, social services, and prevention organizations. In FY2020, 2,290 total participants attended, in-person or virtually, one or more of the 34 clinical training and educational programs conducted by the Center. Of these participants, 30% attended problem gambling for the first time.

## ANNUAL MARYLAND CONFERENCE ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

This annual statewide learning forum brings together national and local experts in the field of problem gambling, as well as Maryland state and local policy makers, community leaders, behavioral health providers, and other health professionals. Although a date and location (Friday, June 19, 2020 at the BWI Marriott Hotel) had been reserved for the 8th Annual Maryland Conference on Problem Gambling in FY2020 and the planning had begun, the event was cancelled due to federal and state mandated pandemic guidelines around large in-person gatherings. In response to the cancellation, the Center produced additional virtual trainings on a variety of topics in May and June.

## AGENCY, REGIONAL AND STATEWIDE TRAININGS AND PRESENTATIONS

The Center offered a total of 21 in-person clinical problem gambling in-person or virtual training programs and presentations in FY2020 reaching over 650 clinicians, health professionals, and preventionists across all regions. Targeted outreach to over 370 programs and private practitioners was conducted by the Center to determine their problem gambling needs. In-service programs and presentations as requested by agencies were held in seven jurisdictions as well as virtually. In addition, three-days of regional clinical trainings were held in November-December on basic and advanced topics, awarding Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to 173 health professionals.

## DISORDERED GAMBLING FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

The Center developed and launched the Disordered Gambling Fellowship Program (Fellowship Program) in FY2020 to expand its capability of clinical outreach and training. This program will broaden the opportunities to enhance the skills of behavioral health providers to provide problem gambling/gambling disorder treatment to individuals and families throughout the state, and increase awareness of the Center's resources, including the Provider Referral Network Directory and Peer Recovery Support.

A total of nine (9) clinicians, engaged in the Problem Gambling Reimbursement Program and listed on the Provider Network Referral Directory, completed 36 hours of clinical training and 9 hours of interactive group consultation meetings. This participation enhances their ability to serve as a trainer on the topic of disordered gambling treatment; to serve as a general resource regionally and at the state level on disordered gambling treatment; and to provide supervision of other professionals in the treatment, prevention, and public awareness of problem gambling.

## FAITH-BASED TRAINING

In collaboration with the Center, the Maryland Council on Problem Gambling (MCPG) conducts faith-based training to lay ministers, clergy and providers as a means to educate and provide help to Maryland residents who may be struggling with a gambling problem. Since 2017, MCPG has trained approximately 120 faith and spiritual community stake holders in problem gambling and spiritual outreach.



In FY2020, three training modules were conducted to support the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB) Certification for Clergy-Lay Ministers. These programs were held both online and in-person instructing 21 total participants. In addition, one webinar was conducted to 23 attendees entitled: *Youth Gamers and Gamblers: Is It Just Innocent Fun, Curiosity or a Problem.*

### **TRAINING FOR FAMILY SUPPORT, MARYLAND COALITION OF FAMILIES (MCF)**

The Center and MCF collaborate to provide gambling peer support for families (MCF Peers) and individuals (the Center Peers). To that end, the Center provides problem gambling training for MCF staff to increase their capability of providing support when needed. In FY2020, the Center conducted four instructor-led webinars with a total of 77 participants. Topics included: Supporting Families living with Gambling Disorder; Understanding Problem Gambling; Gaming and Gambling; and Identifying Gambling Problems within the Family Unit.



### **ONLINE TRAINING**

In FY2020, participation in the center's online and on-demand training programs increased by 73% over FY2019, reporting over 1,500 attendees completing these programs.

#### **Live Webinars**

The Center increased its offerings of presenter-led, one-hour Problem Gambling Webinars in FY2020 to accommodate the pandemic restrictions for in-person gatherings and broaden the accessibility to problem gambling training. A total of 1,451 participants attended the 13 webinars, which covered topics of prevention, treatment, and recovery.

#### **On Demand**

The Center's two on-demand training programs (launched in FY2016), *Integrating Problem Gambling into Substance Abuse Disorder and Mental Health Treatment, Part One and Two*, hosted on [mdproblemgambling.com](http://mdproblemgambling.com), are designed for staff at any level within state health departments/organizations. These programs further expand the commitment to integrate gambling counseling within existing behavioral health programs. At the end of FY2020, over 107 unique individuals had completed these on-demand training programs, and 752 individuals have completed these programs since the on-demand programs launched.

### **CASE CONSULTATION CALLS**

The Center continues to provide Case Consultation Calls four times a month to enhance the skills and competence of treatment providers to address the needs of clients with gambling problems and provide additional supervision support for national gambling counseling accreditation requirements. A total of 168 attendees from 5 jurisdictions participated in 43 calls in FY2020.

### **NATIONAL TRAINING**

In recognition of their expertise in the field of problem gambling, Center staff were invited to present at six national conferences and symposiums across the United States, covering a variety of topics such as: Responsible Gambling; Problem Gambling Prevention; Problem Gambling and Opioid Use Disorder; Gambling Disorders among Military and Veterans; and Suicide and Problem Gambling. The Center also sponsored six staff to attend the 33rd National Conference on Gambling Addiction & Responsible Gambling in Denver, CO, providing a presentation on Youth Gambling Prevention within the Prevention Showcase and winning the annual award for Excellence in Prevention.

# PREVENTION

The Center's prevention efforts focus on working collaboratively with local health departments, community organizations and schools to educate and implement appropriate prevention policies and practices to address problem gambling. In FY2020, this effort was supported by the Center through special population and youth grant activities and projects to address gambling awareness and problem gambling prevention. A total of 16 grants were awarded producing 39 completed projects, reaching 8,256 people with 14,089 awareness materials distributed. In addition, the Prevention Program conducted 22 presentations reaching 1,758 people.

## SPECIAL POPULATION GRANTS

### National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), Maryland

The Center collaborated in FY2020 with NAMI, a national non-profit organization with the mission of raising awareness and providing support to those affected by mental illness. Research shows those with mental illnesses are more likely to be problem gamblers, so the Center provided a \$10,000 grant to NAMI, Maryland to integrate problem gambling prevention into existing programming. During the fiscal year: a survey for mental health providers was administered; NAMI helpline staff was trained to assist callers that may be in need of problem gambling resources; materials were distributed at community events; e-newsletter messages were sent to 50,000 people; and the Center provided a workshop and exhibited at the annual NAMI Conference.



### Maryland Association of Prevention Professionals and Advocates (MAPP A)

In FY2020, the Center continued a collaborative grant agreement with MAPP A, the Maryland Association of Prevention Professionals and Advocates, a statewide organization promoting the field of prevention by assisting with certification of prevention professionals, providing forums and networking events for the prevention community, and hosting an annual conference. MAPP A is open to all state prevention coordinators but focuses on substance misuse prevention. The Center provided a \$10,000 grant to MAPP A to increase the integration of problem gambling prevention with substance misuse prevention programming statewide. In FY 2020, the Center provided a webinar on problem gambling prevention, presented and exhibited at the MAPP A conference, and presented at two quarterly MAPP A Gatherings. Through connections at the MAPP A Conference and Gatherings, 10,619 materials were distributed in all 24 Maryland jurisdictions.



### My Life Foundation

The Center established a new collaboration with My Life Foundation during FY2020. My Life Foundation provides services to the Asian American communities in health and wellness, advocates for reducing health disparities, and promotes culturally sensitive education and awareness of mental health. Maryland data shows the Asian population is at increased risk of developing gambling problems. My Life Foundation was provided a \$10,000 grant to integrate problem gambling prevention education and resources into current substance misuse prevention and mental health promotion programming. In FY2020, My Life Foundation added problem gambling prevention information into their current education programs, listed the Center's information on their website, translated materials to Korean, distributed materials at community events, and sent staff to problem gambling prevention training.



### Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA)

The Center's Prevention program met with the Secretary of Aging and staff during FY2020 to establish a collaborative relationship that resulted in a draft letter of collaboration. The Center provided training on seniors and gambling for MDoA employees. In addition, some of the Center's video PSAs were approved for use in Maryland senior centers and for use by the MDoA. The draft letter of collaboration was not signed due to COVID-19, but will be signed in FY 2021 with additional problem gambling strategies added. In addition to the collaboration with MDoA, the Center's Prevention Program and the peer recovery support specialists developed a presentation on safe gambling tips for seniors for use in Maryland senior centers. Presentations began in January 2020.



### University of Maryland, Baltimore, School of Medicine National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH)

In FY2020, the Center continued an interagency collaborative agreement with National Center for School Mental Health (NCSMH). The mission of NCSMH is to strengthen policies and programs in school mental health to improve learning and promote success for America's youth. In FY2020, the Center provided \$16,000 to NCSMH to conduct two policy analyses, one on youth gambling in Maryland and the other an analysis of student code of conduct booklets for mention of gambling. NCSMH provided information on next steps for gambling policies in schools, designed a youth flier and parent flier on problem gambling prevention, created two youth activities, and connected the youth grant program to two Baltimore City Public Schools.



### YOUTH GRANTS

During FY2020, the Center provided eleven youth grants to three school Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) chapters, one church youth group, and the Mental Health Agency in Anne Arundel County. In Baltimore City, two schools and two organizations participated in the youth grant opportunity. In Prince George's County, two youth organizations implemented underage and problem gambling prevention grants. The goal of youth grants is for youth to implement underage and problem gambling prevention strategies among their peers. Grants of \$1,000 were provided to grantees in FY2020. Of the 34 youth grant strategies proposed for FY2020, 20 were completed and 14 were postponed by COVID-19. The following underage and problem gambling prevention strategies were implemented by youth grantee organizations in FY2020, reaching over 4,051 youth across the State: videos produced, community exhibits, Kahoot games created, poster contests, lunch time cafeteria exhibits, water bottle design contest, social media messages distributed, post cards designed, workshops hosted, posters displayed, advisory slides in schools, and skits.



### OTHER PREVENTION ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Center's Prevention program earned the **Excellence in Prevention Award** presented at the 33rd National Conference on Gambling Addiction & Responsible Gambling on July 19, 2019 in Denver, Colorado. The Center was pre-selected to present and exhibit during the Prevention Showcase its "youth-to-youth" prevention effort that focused on working with existing Maryland youth organizations located in casino jurisdictions.

The Center published an article in the Maryland's American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) electronic journal on safe gambling tips and problem gambling resources. In addition, Prevention completed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process to conduct underage and problem gambling prevention focus groups and key interviews across the State.



Integrating Youth Driven  
Gambling Awareness and Outreach  
in Your Community

# PUBLIC POLICY

The Center, in collaboration with the Legal Resource Center for Public Health Policy (LRC) and the Public Health Law Clinic at the University of Maryland Francis King Carey School of Law (law school), actively scanned public policy issues arising in Maryland around responsible and problem gambling. The Center engaged partners, decisionmakers, and stakeholders across the state to align gambling laws and policies with the promotion of healthy and informed choices for all adult gamblers.

## MARYLAND GAMBLING INITIATIVES

The LRC continued to monitor proposed gambling legislation in Maryland during the Maryland Legislative Session. Despite the 2020 legislative session ending early due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the LRC tracked a total of 28 bills that referenced gambling within the House and Senate, provided written and oral testimony in Annapolis, created and updated a real-time legislative tracking document to a listserv of over 300 registrants, and held weekly calls to discuss prominent public health legislation. Of special note was SB4 on Sports Wagering which required Maryland voters to adopt a referendum that authorizes sports and event wagering in the state. The referendum is Question two on the November 2020 ballot. The Center continues to track and monitor all potential gambling legislation to ensure that responsible gambling practices are adhered to and potential harms from gambling are minimized and addressed.



## PARTICIPATION IN POLICY FORUMS

The Center participates and presents in a variety of policy forums with organizations such as the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency, the Maryland Department of Health Behavioral Health Administration, Maryland Alliance for Responsible Gambling, and casino representatives. In FY2020, the Center initiated new relationships with the Network for Public Health Law and the University of Maryland School of Public Health Department of Kinesiology where classes such as Gambling in the New Millennium are taught as part of the University's I-series. The Center presented in these forums on a variety of topics including sports betting, gambling prevalence during COVID-19, problem gambling legal and policy levers, and a high-level overview of what is problem gambling and Maryland's unique approach at the Center.



## NATIONAL LEGISLATIVE MONITORING

The Center monitored legislation across the country, primarily related to sports betting, as has been a national focus since the Supreme Court of the United States ruling in *Murphy v. National Collegiate Athletic Association*. The Maryland General Assembly took up the sports betting issue in January 2020 and the Center submitted both written and oral testimony to show what problem gambling protections states have implemented across the country and how Maryland could proceed. As COVID-19 continues to impact the country, the Center has been monitoring safety protocols of lotteries and casinos across the country to help inform procedures in Maryland.

# RESEARCH

In fiscal year (FY) 2020, the Research Program on Gambling (RPG) affiliated with the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling advanced its research agenda with a continued focus on the identification and prevention of problem gambling behavior and attendant consequences for public health. The following report details the programs' progress and achievements over the past year including the following.

## PREVENTION

**Prevention and Etiology of Gambling Addiction in the US (PEGASUS):** The PEGASUS study, the RPG's flagship research endeavor, is a prospective cohort study designed to identify risk and protective factors related to problem gambling. A total of 1,346 participants from across Central Maryland have been enrolled in this cohort since the study commencement September 2015. Follow-up data has been collected since January of 2017. In FY2020 the RPG completed 1,159 participant visits.

## IMPACT

**Impact of gambling on the social structure in Maryland:** In order to assess the social impact on gambling, during FY2020 the RPG has reviewed existing literature on the impact of gambling in the following areas: psychiatric disorders and the relation to problem gambling, adolescent health, traffic patterns around casinos, and prevention of problem gambling.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

**Analysis of Maryland Helpline data:** The RPG has been monitoring helpline data to establish the average number of calls per-month. During FY2020, it was decided to expand helpline research into evaluating benchmarks related to effectiveness. RPG plans to continue analysis plan and evaluate the effectiveness of the Helpline in FY2021.

**Evaluation of the effectiveness of peer support programs:** The RPG has been tasked with the formal evaluation of the Center of Excellence's Peer Recovery Support programs. In FY2020, the RPG began assessing this program in terms of providing effective and meaningful services to individuals seeking peer support. It also established benchmarks to rate success.

**Monitoring and evaluation of Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) support services:** The RPG has been tasked with the formal evaluation of the Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF) efforts to provide support services for family members of individuals with substance use and/or disordered gambling. In FY2020 benchmarks were established to monitor progress.

**Evaluation of the Faith Based Gambling Initiative:** Collaborating with leaders of the Maryland Council of Problem Gambling, the RPG has developed data collection and implementation strategies to formally evaluate the faith-based gambling initiative. In FY2020 benchmarks were established to monitor progress.

**Assessing gambling in vulnerable populations:** The RPG has focused its efforts on evaluating the impact of gambling on two vulnerable populations: (1) traffic accidents around casinos (2) race and problem gambling. The first project seeks to identify the correlation between increased accidents when a casino opens. The second project explores the correlation between race and problem gambling.

## **SURVEILLANCE**

**Free State Data Warehouse:** The program continues to grow its data warehouse and collaborative partnership with CODES to support assessment of the public health impact of gambling in Maryland. Warehouse data have been used in several projects including an analysis of accidents involving pedestrians and vehicles around all six Maryland Casinos before and after its opening.

**Prevalence Study:** The statewide follow-up prevalence study took place in 2017 after all approved casinos have opened in order to fully assess impact of expanded casino gambling on problem gambling prevalence in Maryland. Data analysis and a final report were completed in December of 2018. The final report was presented to Maryland's Behavioral Health Administration and Maryland Legislature. In FY2020 6000 Marylanders were surveyed about their gambling behaviors, perceptions, and other psycho/social aspects. Analysis will take place in FY2021.

## **CAPACITY BUILDING AND OUTREACH**

**Research Affiliate Program:** The RPG continues its Research Affiliate Program, a networking and outreach program designed to foster research collaborations among faculty, staff and students interested in gambling issues. To date, more than 70 faculty, staff and students have applied for affiliate status.

## **STRATEGIC COLLABORATIONS**

A productive research partnership has been developed with the NICHD Analytical and Biophotonics Lab to assess brain activity during a simulated gambling task as part of the PEGASUS cohort study, building on a successful pilot study establishing the feasibility of fNIRS technology for this purpose. Results were published in FY2019. In FY2020 a paper was published describing the findings.



# FUTURE DIRECTIONS

## PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Continue to expand awareness messaging on responsible gambling and problem gambling to support outreach efforts to mental health/behavioral health providers and organizations across Maryland
- Enhance website capability and usability by implementing additional interactive tools to engage help seekers and provide education and resources on responsible gambling and problem gambling.
- Implement a robust social media plan to further visibility and outreach.
- Develop new awareness materials for non-English speaking help seekers.

## TREATMENT AND INTERVENTION SERVICES

- Continue to outreach to Maryland mental health/behavioral health providers, organizations and private practitioners to become part of Maryland's no cost treatment network to better serve problem gamblers and/or concerned others of the gambler who reside in Maryland.
- Expand the Center's ability to provide clinical and technical assistance to organizations and/or private practitioners in the Maryland behavioral health system of care within all jurisdictions and expand the incorporation of problem gambling screening and assessment into their existing work.
- Continue the Center's collaboration with Maryland's gaming industry to ensure incorporation of responsible gambling practices within the industry.
- Increase Helpline visibility through increased public awareness of the Helpline number through a variety of outlets such as, social media, radio, web, and television.
- Develop better access to resources for non-English speaking help seekers through awareness materials and a language line.

## PEER RECOVERY SUPPORT

- Continue outreach efforts to expand the use of Peer Recovery Support services within mental health/behavioral health providers and other organizations.
- Increase collaboration with mental health/behavioral health providers and other organizations in the western region and Eastern Shore.
- Expand one-on-one peer support for individuals seeking to limit, control, or stop their gambling.

## TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- Expand the number of virtual and on-demand trainings offered to broaden the access of problem gambling education for providers, private practitioners, organizations and preventionists.
- Utilize the Disordered Gambling Fellowship Program participants to increase the clinical capability for integration of problem gambling/gambling disorder screening, assessment and treatment into current protocols.

- Continue to broaden training topics across awareness, prevention, treatment, and recovery.
- Increase the ability to provide Continuing Education Units (CEUs) to additional certified licensees, such as Certified Peer Recovery Specialists.

## **PREVENTION**

- Compile a problem gambling prevention needs assessment, including compilation of quantitative and qualitative data on problem gambling prevalence, trends, and negative outcomes for adults and youth.
- Develop a comprehensive problem gambling prevention strategic plan.
- Continue to implement and expand special population problem gambling prevention grants to organizations that reach populations statewide and develop evaluation tools.
- Continue to implement and expand youth grants in Maryland with a focus on casino jurisdictions to empower youth to reach their peers with messages and strategies promoting underage and problem gambling prevention.

## **PUBLIC POLICY**

- Continue to track the impact of COVID-19 on problem gambling and be responsive to community needs, as they arise.
- Further involvement with the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency to comprise Center presentations at Lottery meetings throughout the year and further collaboration in Lottery and casino responsible gambling programming.
- Continue to communicate with a broader community of stakeholders including legal organizations and the Maryland Judiciary to build awareness of problem gambling as a mental health issue.
- Develop, as appropriate, an electronic educational campaign for Maryland state and local legislators on responsible gambling.

## **RESEARCH**

- Continue collaborative efforts and the expansion of the research agenda on problem gambling.
- FY21 efforts will include: prevention initiatives; identification and surveillance; evaluation of public policy; ongoing impact assessment of expanded legalized gambling; identification of vulnerable populations; and promotion of scientific research on gambling.

# AFFILIATES

---

## PUBLIC AWARENESS

### **G3GROUP AGENCY, LLC**

**Anita Schott**  
CEO

**John E. Pusey**  
Director, Development & Hosting

**Tammy Vinson Schott**  
Project Manager

### **ACCENT INTERACTIVE, INC.**

**Ken Kinard**  
CEO

**Christopher Valotta**  
Graphic Designer & Web Developer

### **MARYLAND COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING (MCPG)**

**Deborah G. Haskins, PhD, LCPC, ACS, MAC, ICGC II**  
President

**Tineka Rice, LCSW-C, CCGSO**  
Vice President

**Dr. Shandra Parks, MSW, CCGSO**  
Secretary

**Tamala Law, MBA**  
Treasurer

**Brina Olunkwa, BA**  
Administrative Assistant

---

## POLICY

### **NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE OF MARYLAND (NCADD-MD)**

**Nancy Rosen-Cohen, PhD**  
Executive Director

**Susan Pompa**  
Associate Director

**Ann T. Ciekot**  
Partner, Public Policy Partners

**Carlos Hardy**  
Recovery Leadership Coordinator

**Cathy Gray**  
Office Manager

### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND FRANCIS KING CAREY SCHOOL OF LAW**

**Kathleen Hoke, JD**  
Law School Professor  
Director, Network for Public Health Law, Eastern Region  
Director, Legal Resource Center for Public Health Policy

**Blair Inniss, JD, MA**  
Government Affairs Coordinator, The Center  
Staff Attorney, Legal Resource Center

---

## PREVENTION

### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND SCHOOL OF MEDICINE NATIONAL CENTER FOR SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM**

**Nancy Lever, PhD**  
Executive Director

**Kelly Willis, LCSW-C**  
Associate Director

**Brittany R. Parham-Patterson, PhD**  
Faculty Advisor

**Laura Cornell, PhD**  
Clinical Psychology Intern

---

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Maryland Department of Health (MDH)**

**Behavioral Health Administration (BHA)**

**Beacon Health Options, Maryland (Beacon)**

**Maryland Coalition of Families (MCF)**

**Maryland Department of Aging (MDoA)**

**Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (MLGCA)**

**Maryland Association of Prevention Professionals &  
Advocates (MAPPA)**

**My Life Foundation, Inc.**

**National Alliance on Mental Illness-Maryland (NAMI-Maryland)**

**National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG)**

**Optum Maryland (Optum)**





**The Maryland Center of Excellence on PROBLEM GAMBLING**

250 W. Pratt Street, Suite #1050  
Baltimore, MD 21201  
667-214-2120

- [www.helpmygamblingproblem.org](http://www.helpmygamblingproblem.org)
- [www.mdproblemgambling.com](http://www.mdproblemgambling.com)

**MARYLAND HELPLINE: 1-800-GAMBLER**

