



Problem Gambling Services Program Overview

1) Bettor Choice Treatment

Regionalized Bettor Choice Gambling Treatment Programs (5 contracted agencies statewide)

- Connecticut Renaissance, Region 1
- Midwestern CT Council on Alcoholism, Region 2
- United Children and Family Services, Region 3
- Wheeler Clinic, Region 4
- The Connection, Inc., Region 5

Provide counseling for adults 18 and older who exhibit problem or disordered gambling and persons affected by gambling (i.e. spouse, family member, and significant other).

- Types of treatment: Individual, Couples, Family, Group and Medication Management.
- Clinicians are master’s level and licensed or licensed eligible. Clinicians also have the National Certified Gambling Counselor (NCGC) certification, or are working towards obtaining this certification.
- Peer Counselors are on staff and provide case management and financial counseling services. Peer Counselors also assist with group and individual counseling.
- Bettor Choice programs accept insurance and have DMHAS grant funding to significantly decrease or eliminate financial costs.
- Bettor Choice programs are offered throughout the five different regions of the state. All programs are outpatient except MCCA, which offers both outpatient and inpatient treatment.

2) Disordered Gambling Integration (DiGIn)

Disordered Gambling Integration (DiGIn) Programs. (12 contracted agencies statewide)

• Central Naugatuck Valley Help	• MCCA
• CommuniCare	• Natchaug Hospital
• Community Mental Health Affiliates	• Perception Programs
• Community Renewal Team	• Recovery Network of Programs
• CT Community for Addiction Recovery	• United Community and Family Services
• CT Renaissance	• Wheeler Clinic

Integration of gambling into 12 Substance Abuse, Mental Health and Recovery Programs throughout the state of Connecticut. The DiGIn programs are not expected to treat clients, rather to raise awareness about gambling in their facilities through:

- Integrating gambling into intakes, screeners, assessments and clinical interventions.
- Discuss the role gambling can play in the recovery of clients.
- Work towards integrating gambling into administration – mission statement, policies and procedures.
- Identify at least three (3) staff who will work towards increasing competency in problem gambling by attending monthly meetings and completing the requirements for the Specialty Certificate in Problem Gambling (SCPG).
- Completion of initial and follow up Awareness and Readiness surveys for staff and program participants.
- Annual Problem Gambling Capability site visits, with quarterly collaboration meetings to assist programs in achieving their annual goals.

3) Prevention

Prevention Programs

- Contracted with 5 lead Regional Action Councils statewide
 - Communities for Change, Region 1
 - MCSAAC, Region 2
 - SERAC, Region 3
 - ERASE, Region 4
 - CNVRAC, Region 5
- Statewide Gambling Awareness Prevention Initiative: Moving towards Gambling Informed Prevention, Intervention and Treatment across the continuum of care and across the lifespan in the five Mental Health and Addiction Services Human Service Regions in Connecticut. Five identified Regional Action Councils form the Gambling Awareness Leadership Team which supports Regional Gambling Awareness Teams comprised of prevention and treatment professionals along with community partners. These Teams meet quarterly and focus on collaborative partnerships, specifically on the strategic gathering of regional community awareness and readiness data, review and assessment of select programs, and the creation of a regional and statewide gambling awareness infrastructure. Ultimately this structure will support and inform regional strategic planning and gambling awareness integration. Select Team and community members are working towards achieving the Gambling Awareness Certificate of Competency.

Special projects supported through this Initiative include but are not limited to: Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leadership Project; Financial Literacy with Older Adults, Women, People in Recovery and Youth; Fantasy Sports Awareness; working with the business community; program evaluation and regional data collection.

- Asian Pacific American (APA) Ambassador Program – Collaboration between PGS, the Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling (CCPG) and the Asian and Pacific American Affairs Commission (APAAC), to raise awareness about gambling in APA Communities. Progress of this initiative is being evaluated and will serve as a model for future collaborations with other populations and communities perceived as “at-risk” for developing gambling problems.
 - 5 Ambassadors (Japanese, Laotian, Vietnamese, Burma, and Chinese) are being trained on Problem Gambling and have created a Community Conversation Model to facilitate discussions on gambling in their communities.
- Congregational/Community Assistance Program (CAP) – Provides six hour trainings to organizations (faith based and others) and businesses throughout the state on raising awareness of the impacts of addictions, including gambling and suicide.
- Contracting with State Regional Education Service Center Network (RESCs): Raising awareness about gambling in the Capital Region Education Service Center (CREC) magnet school system by training school counselors, integrating gambling awareness into school policies and Development Guidance curriculum, facilitating prevention trainings with student leaders, and working with after school programs on a gambling social media campaign.
- Gambling Awareness, Education and Training programs developed and delivered to DMHAS employees as well as in partnership with local, state or national organizations/initiatives.

4) Research

- Working with Nancy Petry and CCPG to create fact sheets (i.e. Expansion of Legalization Gambling, Gambling and the Criminal Justice System, Gambling and Older Adults, and Gambling with Youth) and update the Bettor Choice Intake Form.
- Development of a one-session pilot gambling awareness training for high school students in partnership with Dr. Nancy Petry from UCONN Medical Center.
- Criminal Justice System: Collaborating with DMHAS’ Research Department/UCONN on conducting a prevalence study regarding gambling within the Department of Corrections.
- Contracting with Dr. Marc Potenza from Yale University for ongoing problem gambling research with focus on special populations, co-occurring disorders, and youth gambling behaviors.

5) Partnerships

- Partnership with The Connecticut Council on Problem Gambling to continually evaluate and improve the Problem Gambling Helpline efficacy; provide support and collaboration on special interest assignments (i.e. Older Adults, Asian and Pacific American Ambassadors program, youth, Criminal Justice, etc.)
- Partnership with the Recovery Community: PGS contracts with the Connecticut Communities for Addiction Recovery (CCAR) and Advocacy Unlimited (AU) to raise awareness to the co-occurring nature of gambling problems, and build capacity within these two organizations to educate their members as to the potential risks of gambling activities for people in recovery to recognize and refer their peers who may be experiencing problems with their gambling.
- PGS partners with the gambling industry on three initiatives: a) Partnership Meetings with the Connecticut Lottery Corporation (CLC) and CCPG; b) Gambling Awareness for All of Connecticut (G-FACT), a collaboration comprised of treatment, prevention and community professionals, including the CLC and Connecticut's two casinos, on raising awareness of gambling for older adults), and c) The Coalition Meeting, comprised of CCPG, the CLC, the two casinos, and Off Track Betting staff members.
- New England Consortium (NEC) member: The NEC is made up of the six New England state affiliates of the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG), state treatment and prevention programs and networks as well as the state gaming authorities, helplines, and various representatives from the gaming industry. The NEC meets quarterly to network, share and create resources, and discuss collaborative opportunities and projects.

6) Criminal Justice

- Disordered Gambling and the Criminal Justice System-Partnering with The Connection Inc. (TCI) to raise awareness and bring parity to sentencing and treatment in the criminal justice system. Creation of video, outreach to judges, lawyers, probation and parole offices, lunch and learn events.
- Training probation officers and other CSSD providers through the CSSD training institute. The main focus of training is on education on gambling as a co-occurring disorder, learning to identify problem gambling through evidence-based screening protocols, and interventions and resources for treatment.
- Integration into Dept. of Correction, by way of, in-service training of DOC staff and providers on problem gambling awareness and integrative strategies into practice.