

2014 STAKEHOLDER REPORT
ARIZONA OFFICE OF PROBLEM GAMBLING



MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

It should not surprise us when looking back to reflect on the previous year, that many changes and challenges were presented, and fiscal year 2014 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014) is certainly a case in point. The Arizona Office of Problem Gambling experienced another shift in leadership with Leslie Welch leaving for an exciting opportunity in another State office. She led OPG for 15 months with innovative ideas and the initiation of important projects. Though her time as Director was short, her impact was powerful.

It is an honor and privilege to have been appointed Program Director for the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling. I look forward to the opportunity to lead this unit in our mission to provide and support effective problem gambling prevention, treatment, and education programs throughout Arizona. I have been with the Arizona Department of Gaming since July 1996, and have worked with the Self-Exclusion program since its inception in 2003. I thank Director Bergin for his confidence in me, and I thank my staff for their individual professionalism, generous spirit, and passion for their jobs.



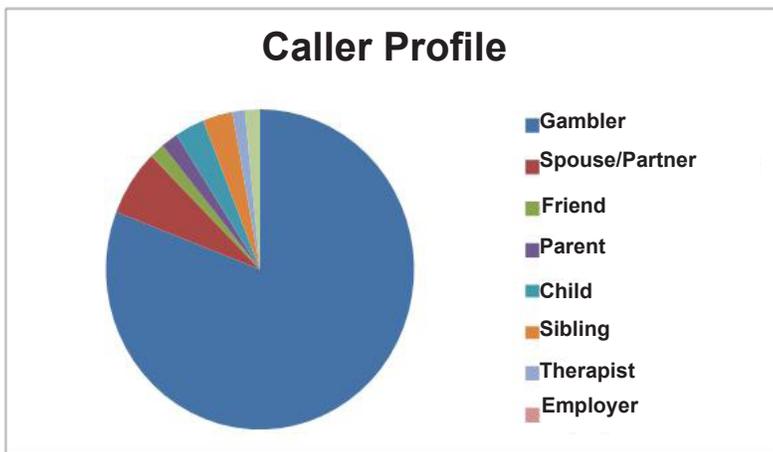
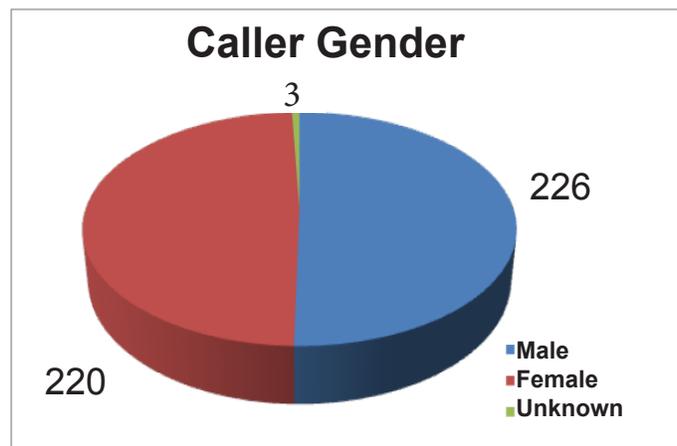
The Office of Problem Gambling has maintained as primary importance the partnership with you, our stakeholders. We hope our joint efforts will serve the community to provide quality services for the education, prevention, and treatment of problem gamblers. To this end, our office has exhibited at a record number of events around the state, attended a variety of conferences, and invested in a more effective data management system (DMS). The new DMS will be more user-friendly as well as more accurate in tracking and maintaining problem gambling records. These records provide critical funding information and play a vital role in working with legislators and other stakeholders.

It is my sincere hope that as our stakeholder, you will not hesitate to share your ideas and suggestions with us. I look forward to a continued dynamic partnership offering effective problem gambling prevention, treatment, and education programs throughout Arizona.

Larissa T. Pixler

Arizona Department of Gaming
Office of Problem Gambling Program Director

The Office of Problem Gambling maintains a 24/7 helpline: 1-800 Next-Step. During fiscal year 2014, there were slightly more male callers (226) into the helpline than female callers (220). Most of the callers were married, employed, and had no children living in the household. Over 16% reported depression as a medical problem at the time of the call. The helpline is advertised in various sources throughout the state.



In fiscal year 2014, more than half of the callers were aware of our helpline through tribal casinos. The next most used caller referral sources were the internet, phone book, lottery display, and the Office of Problem Gambling website. There were 116 informational packets sent out to callers and a total of 449 calls to the helpline.

EVENTS: EDUCATION & PREVENTION

The Education and Prevention Administrator participated in 91 events this fiscal year with exhibits at: ASU’s Summer Institute on Behavioral Health; All Things Senior; Lovin’ Life Expo’s in Tucson, Sun City, and Mesa; The 10th Annual Resource Roundup; Arizona Youth Day; Disability Empowerment & Wellness Fair; Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church Health Fair; Art of Recovery; and Fresh Start Women’s Resource Center.

These efforts compliment our numerous face-to-face interactions at health fairs and other gatherings across the state. We also provided presentations to the Federal Correctional Facility in Phoenix, Sunny Slope Senior Center, Banner Health Hospital in Sun City, Globe Active Adult Center, and Recovery Innovations.



MEET OUR STAFF

Kathy Donner has been with the Arizona Office of Problem Gambling since 2012. She provides education, prevention and awareness of problem gambling issues. Kathy brings to this position extensive work history with HIV prevention as well as substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment.



Kathy Donner
Education and Prevention
Administrator



Larissa T. Pixler
Office of Problem Gambling
Program Director

Larissa T. Pixler was appointed Program Director May 2014. During her 19 years at the Arizona Department of Gaming, she has served in several capacities including Administrative Assistant, Certified Criminal Intelligence Analyst, and Self-Exclusion Administrator. She is currently working on her Masters of Administration with a focus on Public Management.

Elise Mikkelsen is the Treatment Administrator with the Office of Problem Gambling. Elise has been with the department for more than 7 years and formerly held the role of Education and Prevention Administrator with the agency. Elise has more than 20 years experience in the behavioral health field. Prior to joining the Office of Problem Gambling, Elise was the Clinical Director of a behavioral health agency in Phoenix.



Elise Mikkelsen
Treatment Administrator

SYMPOSIUM

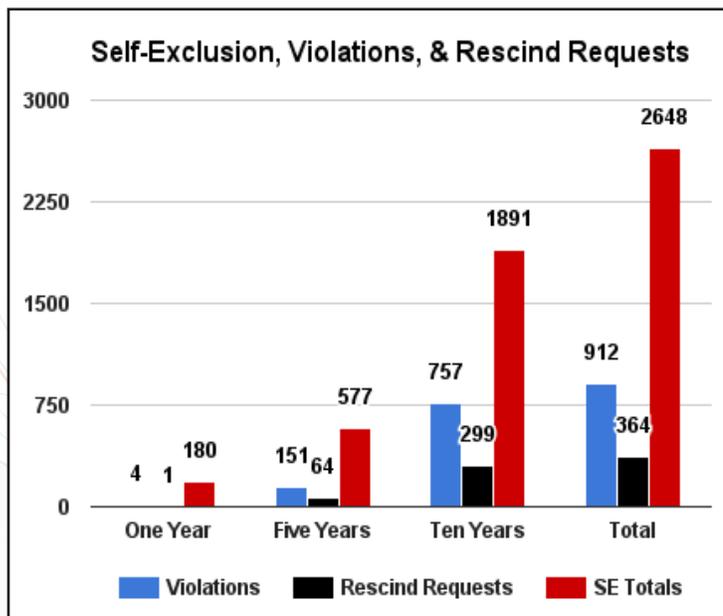
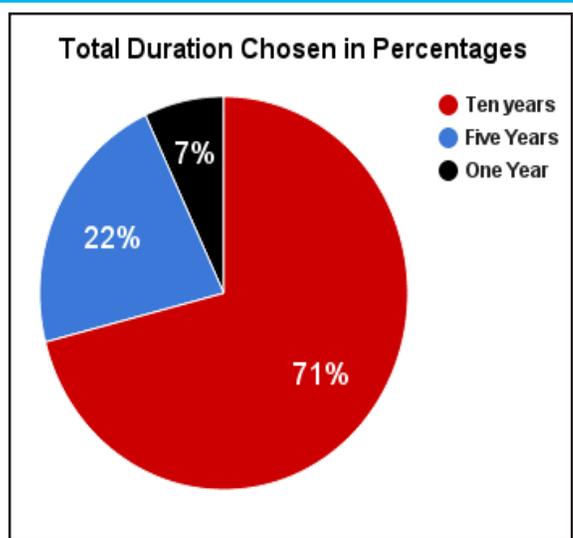
The Office of Problem Gambling sponsored a day-long Symposium on March 3, 2014, entitled Problem Gambling: Sharing Ideas and Resources. Dr. Jon E. Grant, Professor of Psychiatry & Behavioral Neuroscience at the University of Chicago provided the keynote address titled “Gambling Disorder and DSM-5”. In one of the morning break-out sessions, Dr. Grant also discussed “Relationship Between Gambling and Substance Use: Implications for Treatment”. Other morning break-out sessions included, “A Medley of Counseling” by Jim Soward and, “Music Therapy Methods in the Treatment of Addictions,” by Sally Niles. The afternoon keynote speakers, Dr. Patricia Penn and Dr. Rachel Abrams, presented “Mindfulness-a Versatile Approach for Addictions and Balanced Living.” They also presented a break-out session in the afternoon titled, “Wherever you Go, There you are: Mindfulness Tools”. The event also included a panel discussion titled “Individuals Sharing Problem Gambling Recovery Experiences” facilitated by Larissa Pixler.

Save the Date!

The 2015 Symposium is scheduled for Monday, March 2, 2015. For more information, please visit our website at www.problemgambling.az.gov

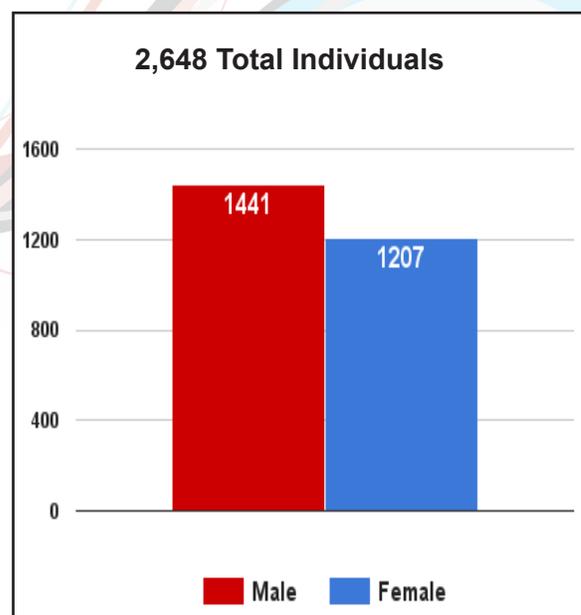
SELF-EXCLUSION

The self-exclusion program began in 2003 and offers problem gamblers the ability to exclude themselves from casinos for a period of one, five or 10-years. Since its inception, the Office of Problem Gambling has processed 6,182 self-exclusions. At the end of fiscal year 2014 there were 2,648 individuals participating in the statewide self-exclusion program. Since April 2013, the first of the 10-year self-exclusions began to expire. By the end of 2014, 341 10-year self-exclusions expired, and the office continues to see a decrease in the aggregate number. However, when compared to the one and five-year self-exclusions, the 10-year totals continue to dominate. Many people who have opted for one and five-year self-exclusions have renewed after the expiration. Less than a dozen of the 10-year self-exclusion participants have renewed.



Throughout the self-exclusion process we encourage participants to take advantage of the resources available particularly treatment and Gamblers Anonymous meetings. Most participants adhere to the rules of their self-exclusion and refrain from entering casinos. Casino surveillance, security, and the cashier cage personnel look for those who should not be on the casino property due to their self-exclusion status.

These regulatory safeguards are put in place to aid the self-excluded participant; however, if the participant chooses to continue gambling he or she is doing so with the full knowledge that any winnings will be forfeited. Office of Problem Gambling tracks all reports of self-exclusion violations whether they are self-reported or incident reports from casino personnel. As part of the self-exclusion program our office tracks various participant demographics including gender, age, and race. Data shows we continue to see almost an equal percentage of males and females in the self-exclusion program. At the end of fiscal year 2014, there were 1,207 females (46%) and 1,441 males (54%) in the self-exclusion program. Analysis of the data collected continues to give us a better understanding of the scope of those affected by problem gambling.



TRAINING

Every year the Office of Problem Gambling provides advanced training opportunities to educate providers and stakeholders about the evolving practices and treatment of problem gambling. This year the office was able to provide two trainings; “Emergence: A Theoretical Model for Understanding Recovery from Gambling Addiction” and “Pathological Gambling: Investigating the Biological, Psychological, and Social Factors in Treating Gamblers.”

Tom Litwicky, M.Ed., LISAC, explained emergence as the process by which complex structures arise from the interaction of many relatively less complex parts that coexist over a period of space and time. Through this training, participants were introduced to this theory of development and learned initial strategies that support the emergence and substance of recovery from gambling addiction.

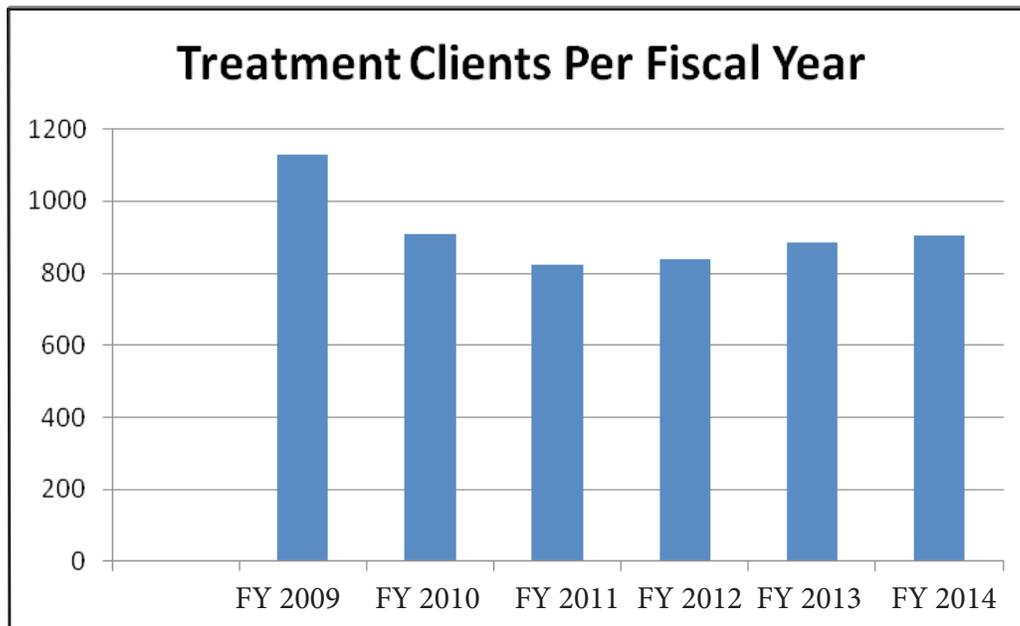
Tim Fong, M.D. from UCLA, presented the most recent research and reviewed topics that included working with the partners of gamblers and managing the propensity of suicide among gamblers. In addition to Dr. Fong discussing several examples of his own challenging cases, this training offered participants the ability to bring their own cases for group discussion and review.

In the upcoming year it continues to be our goal to provide two advanced trainings in the Phoenix and Tucson areas. We encourage our providers, stakeholders, and community to attend these valuable trainings. Please see our website for information and upcoming training schedules.



Tim Fong, M.D.

TREATMENT, MISSION, VISION & VALUE



During the past year, we have continued our commitment to offer support and effective treatment to problem gamblers and those affected by problem gamblers throughout Arizona. The Office of Problem Gambling analyzes demographic information gathered on clients from our 23 statewide treatment providers. In fiscal year 2014, 904 clients received treatment services from OPG funded providers. As in years past, we saw a higher number of women in treatment than men. The average age of the clients at intake is 45. These statistics remind us of the importance of continuing to work with the community to educate them on the needs of problem gamblers.

MISSION:

Our Mission is to provide and support effective problem gambling prevention, treatment, and education programs throughout Arizona.

VISION:

Support a sustainable continuum of services that reduces to a minimum level the impact of problem gambling in Arizona.

VALUE:

The Office of Problem Gambling is committed to a public health approach to address problem gambling issues. This takes into consideration biological, behavioral, economic, cultural, policy, and environmental factors influencing gambling and health. We will accomplish our mission and realize our vision by being culturally sensitive and responsive to the needs of our partners and those we serve. We will be professional, collaborative, equitable, and innovative in our solutions to address problem gambling.



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