

FY 2006 Compulsive Gambling Report

The following activities were undertaken in fiscal year 2006 to address compulsive gambling.

Helpline – The toll-free Gambling Help-line (800-270-7117) was continued in FY06. The purpose of the toll-free number is to provide an assessment and to make referral services. The toll-free number was publicized in newspapers, literature, on MDCH website, and on the backside of lottery tickets.

During FY06, the help-line received 31,288 calls, 1063 callers were referred to treatment and 1257 were referred to Gamblers Anonymous or Gamanon (for those concerned about friends/family members with gambling problems). Approximately, 14,000 calls were for lottery ticket information. The remaining calls were wrong numbers, hang-ups and requests for general information.

Treatment – A statewide network of approximately 50 license clinicians, who have both the experience and special training in treating pathological gamblers and their families, were available to provide counseling services. These clinicians provided individual and group treatment. During FY06, a total of 497 (up from 469 in FY05) individuals were admitted to treatment.

Prevention – Requests for gambling literature totaled 329 and there were 29 requests to borrow gambling videos.

Speakers Bureau – This initiative provided information on problem gambling and treatment resources to 468 people. Problem gambling screening and referral services were held on five university campuses.

Education – As a part of the Michigan Model for Comprehensive School Health, a middle and high school gambling curriculum was implemented in 30 school districts. The curriculum focuses on identifying what gambling behaviors to avoid and those negative gambling messages that encourage youth to gamble. About 4,000 students participated in the gambling curriculum.

Advertising – The problem gambling website was launched this fiscal year. Website address is www.gamblersresponsibly.org. By third quarter the site received 2,745 visits. Media spots (print, radio and television) were targeted to problem gamblers, family and friends.

Research – *A Survey of Gambling Behaviors in Michigan, 2006* was conducted by Western Michigan University. The study found that 2 % of Michigan residents, aged 18 and older, currently have a gambling problem and the 4.1% have had a problem at some point during their life. The study also found that 66% of all problem gamblers in Michigan currently reside in either Detroit or in the Metro-Detroit region and that these regions account for about 74% of all Michigan residents whose gambling might be considered pathological. It is estimated that there are approximately 300,000 Michigan residents age 18 and over with a lifetime gambling problem. This estimation is relatively unchanged from previous prevalence studies.