

Joe Lombardo  
Governor

Rique Robb  
Interim Director



## DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES



NEVADA DIVISION of PUBLIC  
and BEHAVIORAL HEALTH



Andrea Rivers,  
MS  
Administrator

Ihsan Azzam,  
Ph.D., M.D.  
Chief Medical  
Officer

### ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

#### APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, August 5, 2025  
10:00 A.M. to Adjournment

#### 1. Call to order/roll call – Alan Feldman, Chair

Present Members	Absent Members
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alan Feldman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dr. Shane Kraus
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Shane Galster	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Denise Quirk
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stephanie Goodman	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Richard Taylor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Connie Jones	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ted Hartwell	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lesley Pittman	

This meeting was held using remote technology in compliance with Nevada Revised Statute 241.023.

#### 2. Public comment– Alan Feldman, Chair

No public comment was given.

#### 3. For Possible Action

Approval of Minutes April 16, 2025, meeting - Alan Feldman, Chair

Chair Feldman asked for a motion to approve April meeting minutes. Ted Hartwell motioned to approve. Connie Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### 4. For Information Only

Discussion on Legislative Subcommittee Updates and Discussion on SB341 Appropriation Workgroup Updates.

Lesley Pittman stated that the committee did not get the year marks that were hoped for. Primary issues related to the session distracted from efforts given.

Chair Feldman responded, stating that the lack of funding had a significant impact on the legislature wanting to establish a new market.

Ms. Pittman stated there has been discussion for a special session towards the latter part of the year to address

necessary topics related to Medicaid cuts.

Chair Feldman stated that Dr. Shane Kraus and Ms. Jones and himself need to work on a stronger, clearer message from industry, speaking directly about the NRA.

Ms. Sarah Polito reviewed the shared presentation regarding the SB341 update.

Ms. Polito stated three new campaign videos have been created to replace the previous campaign videos. The new videos were created to help better engage the audience. Each video contains one of the three important messages. The first message being how gambling affects the brain, body, and drive. Dr. Fong from UCLA was featured in one of the videos. The second message was specific to online sports betting and what that means for people. The third message was "The Ripple Effect" and how problem gambling effects marriages or a family, and how to get to the other side of issues.

These videos can now be shared along with some digital statistic ads in the coming year. The new videos should be of use for about two years. The three videos are available on the YouTube channel and the website and will be broken down into 15-30 second ad clips as well.

Ms. Polito also reviewed the new Static and Carousel ads and the messages being distributed with the ads.

Ms. Polito reviewed the accomplishments made by the SB341 working committee.

## **5. For Information Only**

Division of Public and Behavioral Health (DPBH) and Bureau of Behavioral Health Wellness and Prevention Updates (BHWP).

### **a. Discussion on Fiscal Reports - *Paul Ripple, DPBH, Contracted Administrative Service Officer I***

Paul Ripple reviewed the Expenditure Schedule for State Fiscal Year 25 (SFY25) Prevention/Treatment Problem Gambling.

Mr. Ripple stated that the fiscal year closing is a few weeks out. Category 19 is predicted to be \$29,000 unspent. Category 20 is predicted to have less than \$200.00 unspent.

Kim Garcia stated Cat. 20 may be closer to fully spent.

### **b. Discussion on Program Updates - *Kim Garcia, BHWP, Social Services Program Specialist III***

Ms. Garcia reviewed the Problem Gambling SFY25 Award Expenditures describing funds remaining and which grants were 100% spent.

Ms. Garcia and Chair Feldman reviewed the State Fiscal Year 26 (SFY 26) layout for funding, budgets, and spending opportunities.

#### **i. Treatment provider data**

Andrea Dassopoulos reviewed the Nevada Problem Gambling Treatment System Quarterly Fiscal Report for all four quarters. The report shows whether treatment programs met their treatment goals and how much each program spent.

#### **ii. Data and Research**

Ms. Dassopoulos went over the project update. A postdoctoral researcher has been hired, Dr. Patrick Xu, to support and expand research efforts. Dr. Xu can bring expertise in gambling, research, media analysis, and public health. UNLV will be researching Self Exclusion and Self-Limiting Tools in Nevada, Sports viewing and Problem Gambling Risk, Latino/a/x Cultural Barriers to Gambling Services, NSHE Student Gambling Surveys, and Workforce Development and Counselor Training Gaps, led by UNR.

Stephanie Goodman asked if CASAT is performing the research.

Ms. Dassopoulos responded, stating Behavioral Health Collective is conducting the research. Chair Feldman stated that Dr. Xu's dissertation related to influences and responsible gaming messages. Though the work is still in the early stages, it is research that needs to continue to be focused on due to the growth and strength of the influencer community.

Dr. Jennifer Ross reviewed the scholarships applied for and granted. In the coming fiscal year, scholarship timelines are to be shortened from one year to ninety days. This year a three-hour

webinar for medical professionals will be held for training. The webinar will be at no cost to those attending.

A meeting is being held with the Board of Examiners to discuss a possible endorsement for LCADC. Further details can be provided after the meeting.

Dr. Adrienne Renwick reviewed a summary of the last fiscal year covering training hours and intern Cohorts. Reno Municipal Court and Washoe County Sheriff's Office joined as new sites. To enhance clinical supervision, screening will continue between community sites, a minimum goal of 100 screenings has been set.

iii. **Public Awareness – Project Worth**

Ms. Polito reviewed a "Project Worth" presentation for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter digital performance and SB341 Final Project Updates. Site traffic increased by 331%. \$37,000 was spent in the last quarter to expand community reach via advertising. Spending will decrease in the next quarter due to less funding. Paid advertisements were placed with Google, appearing in the top showing position 83% of the time. Advertising engagement has brought more site visitors and more tests being completed. Social media followings have increased by 18% on Instagram and 14% on Facebook.

Ms. Garcia stated the committee has been working closely with the State Opioid Response team for anti-stigma and enhancing the project worth.

iv. **Workforce Development –**

Mr. Hartwell reviewed Nevada Council on Problem Gambling's 2025 upcoming initiatives and developments. A co-location has opened in downtown Reno. Mr. Hartwell is present in the office one week a month, but the goal is to have someone present physically the majority of the time. Trey has met with rural coalitions to introduce NVCPG's mission and strengthen statewide presence by working through established networks. Presentation and programs mostly focused on digital gaming and intersectionality with gambling type resources may be converted into a peer training program, similar to what was done with SAGA. NVCPG is currently working with Liberty High School in Las Vegas and Indian Springs High School to train students and both schools to be trainers across the years, not just to student athletes, but the general student population. If the program succeeds, the model will be used in other locations as well. NVCPG has been working closely with the Behavioral Health Collective to find community event opportunities in the Northern region. Denise Quirk has agreed to be a community liaison for the Reno area. An industry training course in Lake Tahoe has been put out, two new videos have been released to replace outdated videos. A new training video is being discussed to be produced and is to include Spanish subtitles and Spanish speaking individuals. NVCPG has started giving training sessions in the community to inform them of additional resources available as well as online resources. The Children's Cabinet will offer trainings resources on video game disorders.

Mr. Hartwell stated that updates for Southern Nevada include continuation of regular programming, especially to substance use providers and individuals going through the recovery process. There are several major employee health fairs, including at Treasure Island and Circus Circus in September, as well as the Clark County employee fair in October. Mr. Hartwell will be returning to the UNLV Krikorian School of Medicine this fall as a result of positive student feedback from the previous presentation. The presentation is now allowed for up to two hours, compared to the previous thirty-minute time.

v. **Prevention**

Mr. Hartwell stated there will be a return to the UNLV Athletic program this fall to present resources available in the community. The presentation will take place in October due to the NCAA considering the allowance of betting on professional sports.

Mr. Hartwell stated the Nevada Council has welcomed a new employee named Ryan, a former member of the Liberty High School football team, who is joining the student athlete Gambling Awareness Program. A social media consultant also working in the NVCPG office has been engaged to assist in enhancing skills and effectiveness of managing NVCPG's digital campaigns.

Mr. Hartwell stated NVCPG will be in Reno next year for the state conference with hopes of a full day add on that is Indigenous Focused to the conference to help specifically with rural and tribal engagement and to honor both the individuals and organizations.

Mr. Hartwell stated an agreement has been reached with Recover Me, which is an app that is focused on the recovery side of the process. The app can help bring awareness to recovery resources as well as treatment resources, such as physical spaces and groups.

## *vi. Treatment*

### *1. Birches Health*

Elliott Rapaport reviewed Birches Health strategic and operational goals presentation for the coming year. Mr. Rapaport stated the strategic plan focuses are to advance equity, expand services, engage partners, foster excellence, and promote sustainability. Operational focuses include health promotion, prevention, outreach and engagement, treatment, and recovery support. Mr. Rapaport stated the first 10 days of data demonstrated exciting opportunities and increased access to care. Mr. Rapaport then reviewed supporting data showing skews and patient studies.

### *2. Mental Health Counseling and Consulting*

Dr. Rory Reid with Mental Health Counseling and Consulting reviewed their current statistics and stated they are seeing positive outcomes in their outpatient programs. Mental Health Counseling and Consulting has invested in advertising in the Mental Health Spectrum magazine, as well as some further website development.

A focus topic is romantic partners, as they are less likely to seek treatment. In partnership, individual and unique needs are not often focused on. Lack of apology from recovering partners can have a negative impact on the relationship and result in resentment. To bring attention to this matter, information and data based on romantic relationships that deal with problem gambling have been included in handouts and other treatment content.

Dr. Reid retired from UCLA last month but will be working part time at UNLV with the psychiatry residents.

Dr. Reid stated he and Dr. Kobe West provided testimonies at the Nevada Bar Hearing as expert witnesses. The case included a student that was embezzling money. Dr. Reid has a presentation for CASAT, as well as a presentation in Washington. Residual funding from last year was applied to a family law attorney, which has never been done before, for a draft document for a postnuptial agreement. This draft document applies to a marital waste agreement that applies to Nevada marriages.

### *3. Dr. Robert Hunter International Problem Gambling Centers*

Ms. Goodman with Dr. Robert Hunter International Problem Gambling Centers stated she has moved offices, and an open house will be held September 29<sup>th</sup>, from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM. The open house will be held to increase awareness of resources available, as well as the significance of problem gambling issues. The new space also offers the opportunity to help with the emotional fatigue counselors are experiencing. Currently, the counselors are thriving.

Ms. Goodman stated on the clinical side there has been significant progress in strengthening both staff development and client services. A new cohort of clinical interns has been successfully hired and onboarded. The new staff have been provided with structured training in problem gambling assessment, motivational interviewing, and co-occurring disorders. An informal service training session for current counselors with an emphasis on trauma, informed care, and culturally responsive practices was also held. This training was designed to help recognize the diverse cultural backgrounds of clients and the unique ways problem gambling impacts various ethnic communities. The clinic is currently seeking a Spanish speaking counselor. Peer support services have been prioritized, and the clinic is using the Evive app. Sports betting is the largest increasing

demographic, most commonly in young males. These individuals tend to not want to sit through IOP for the required amounts of time, as a result, accommodations have been made with therapy measure to better suit this specific group of individuals.

Ms. Jones stated a reminder that September is Responsible Problem Gambling Education Month.

vii. **Gambling Resources and Support Program (GRASP) Integration Project**

Dr. Jeff Marotta stated the Gambling Resources and Support Program (GRASP) is a project 100% funded by the State Opioid Response Program. Dr. Marotta reviewed a presentation on GRASP, covering what GRASP is, the genesis of the project, how the project started, and where the research came from and what the research covered. An application to the SOR grant was completed due to how problem gambling can negatively impact adverse treatment outcomes. The program greatly expands the prior integration program. Elements of the GRASP program include workforce education, client education, digital tools, evaluation, and gambling endorsement. Staff time while attending training will be paid for. Opioid treatment programs are being trained on how to integrate the discussion of problem gambling into the education and clinical process. Lessons available in the Evive app will cover opioid and problem gambling treatments and processes, including how gambling can interfere with their recovery from substances. This program is a three year "road map". The first year is focused on getting the project operating, developing contacting, and onboarding programs. Year two is full implementation, and year three is building off learnings from the previous years, as well as developing reports. Several different agencies have been onboarded and started completing training

**6. For Possible Action**

Discussion and Possible Vote on Approval of Department Reallocations Adjustments for SFY25 and Possible Allocation Adjustments for SFY26. - *Kim Garcia, BHWP, Social Services Program Specialist III, Problem Gambling*

Ms. Garcia stated she removed Mental Health America from the spreadsheet because they withdrew and the 8<sup>th</sup> Judicial Court, resulting in additional dollars.

Chair Feldman asked for a motion to approve the budget along with adding back the state conference funding for Nevada Council on Problem Gambling and mini grant funds. Ms. Goodman and Mr. Hartwell abstained from the motion.

Ms. Pittman motioned to approve. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**7. For Possible Action**

Discussion and Possible Vote on Approval of the Problem Gambling Treatment Services Provider Manual for SFY26 - *Kim Garcia, BHWP, Social Services Program Specialist III, Problem Gambling*

Chair Feldman asked if any changes are substantial or likely to have more of an impact than others.

Dr. Marotta responded, stating that yellow highlighted lines in the provider manual are housekeeping items. A majority of them do not have large policy implications. The biggest change to the manual is the addition of the new program, where peer support has the possibility of being a standalone service. The changes to housekeeping are to implement this and build policies and procedures around the new line of service.

Ms. Garcia stated other housekeeping items are changes such as the Department of Health and Human Services name change to Department of Human Services.

Dr. Marotta stated other changes include the change to Medicaid rates where rates have increased. The manual was revised in June. The manual was reviewed by an unofficial ACPG work group and providers were given the opportunity to review and provide comments.

Chair Feldman asked for a motion for approval of the Problem Gambling Treatment Services Provider Manual for SFY26. Mr. Hartwell motioned to approve. Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **8. Informational**

### **Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling Governance**

#### **a. Committee Membership – *Alan Feldman, Chair***

Chair Feldman and Shane Galster followed up on application letters pertaining to their membership. Dr. Kraus will be taking a sabbatical. Ms. Garcia will follow up on statuses.

#### **b. Discussion on Position Statement or Show of Support letter – *Alan Feldman, Chair***

Chair Feldman stated a disclaimer saying no one is officially allowed to speak on behalf of ACPG. This is especially important when it comes to representation before the legislature.

## **9. Informational**

### **Discussion on Scheduling of Future Meeting Dates and Agenda Items – *Alan Feldman, Chair***

Discussion between the committee of the next meeting. The next ACPG meeting will be held October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025, at 1:00 PM. The meeting agenda for October's meeting is to include an agenda item to plan the next meeting. Ms. Jones requested that representatives from AGEM Responsible Gambling Committee be invited to the next meeting. Ms. Garcia stated she will reach out so that the requested information can be included in the next meeting's agenda.

## **10. Public comment – *Alan Feldman, Chair***

No public comment was given.

## **11. Adjournment - *Alan Feldman, Chair***

Ms. Jones motioned to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 PM.