



Oregon Health Authority  
Problem Gambling Services  
Problem Gambling Toolkit  
for  
SUD Treatment Providers

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## **Identifying and Addressing Problem Gambling in Substance Use Disorder Treatment Settings**

*Multiple research studies have demonstrated that there is a high level of Substance Use Disorder and Gambling Disorder Co-Morbidity.*

- *5% to 20% of SUD clients have a gambling disorder (Petry, 2014).*
- *Up to 58% of individuals with gambling problems have substance use problems ([Marotta, 2021](#)).*
- *A co-morbid gambling problem, left undetected and untreated, has a high potential of undermining potentially successful outcomes in Substance Use Disorder treatment (Ledgerwood, 2002).*

*Without informed screening, problem gambling often goes undetected. Major contributors to challenges with identifying problem gambling include shame, stigma, and lack of awareness of the challenges and impacts associated with gambling disorder. This lack of awareness affects community members dealing with substance use disorders, as well as Substance Use Disorder treatment providers.*

*Oregon Health Authority's Problem Gambling Services Program (OHA PGS) has developed this toolkit of resources specifically for Substance Use Disorder Treatment Providers. The toolkit includes resources on training to screen for problem gambling, psychoeducation curriculum for group therapy – including a general awareness building track as well as an early recovery track. The toolkit also includes further resources on problem gambling and contact information for Problem Gambling Treatment Provider agencies.*

*OHA PGS strives to be accessible for any questions, comments and consultation. Email to [pgs.support@dhsosha.state.or.us](mailto:pgs.support@dhsosha.state.or.us) for more information.*

## **Oregon Health Authority Problem Gambling Services (OHA PGS)**

### **Toolkit for Substance Use Disorder Treatment Providers**

- I. **Problem Gambling Screening Training**
- II. **Psychoeducation for Problem Gambling**
  - a. **Psychoeducation for Problem Gambling Awareness**
  - b. **Psychoeducation for Early Problem Gambling Recovery**
- III. **Problem Gambling Specialty Treatment Referral Guidance**
- IV. **Resources for Clinical Staff**
- V. **BBGS (Brief BioSocial Gambling Screen) & Supplemental Screening Questions for SUD Settings**

## **Problem Gambling Screening Training**

*Problem Gambling experts nationwide have noted that even evidence-based screening tools for Problem Gambling often fail to identify Problem Gambling when delivered in a passive method (such as a paper/pencil screen or online screen) or by staff that have not been informed and trained on the nuances of problem gambling screening. Asking the questions and/or relying on self-referral are not sufficient for identifying and intervening.*

*OHA PGS has developed the “Problem Gambling Training for Social Services Professionals” training series to address information, screening and clinical know-how. The training series is broken up into video based, self-paced modules. MHACBO Continuing Education Credits are available upon completion of each module. OHA PGS recommends that clinical staff working in SUD treatment settings complete modules one and two.*

**Module One – Scope and Impact of Problem Gambling. (one hour).** This training focuses on raising awareness of problem gambling and how it impacts individuals, families and communities.

**Module Two – Gambling screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (GBIRT). (1.5 hours).** This training focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to administer a problem gambling screening in a way that can increase the likelihood of identifying positive cases.

***OHA PGS does recommend that SUD providers complete BOTH modules. However, if time resources are a factor, prioritizing module two is recommended.***

Link to the Training Registration Page: <https://acorn.thinkific.com/collections?category=oha-pgs-tx>

## **Psychoeducation for Problem Gambling**

*Participants in Substance Use Disorder treatment are particularly vulnerable to developing a problem with gambling behavior or compounding a current problem. New-found gambling problems are not uncommon in early recovery from a SUD. And problems with gambling can get worse for people during SUD treatment if not detected and addressed. OHA PGS recommends providing awareness building psychoeducation for all Substance Use Disorder Treatment participants. If problem gambling is identified with current clients, it may be ideal to provide those clients with psychoeducation specific to managing early recovery from a Gambling Disorder.*

*OHA PGS recommends Using “No Dice” by Marcy Nichols. “No Dice” is CBT based Problem Gambling Specific Workbook and Curriculum.*

### **Psychoeducation for Problem Gambling Awareness**

OHA PGS recommends a three session, brief curriculum to build awareness of Problem Gambling and to develop skills around identifying when gambling behavior can be problematic. To this purpose, OHA PGS recommends the following curriculum from “No Dice”:

#### **Session One: “What is Problem Gambling?”**

Discuss Definitions of Problem Gambling. Including Definitions on Page 9. (illicit discussion from group members on personal definitions and experiences).

Review Statistics in “No Dice” on pages 12 & 13.

Facilitator choice of screening worksheet to utilize with the group and discuss. Pages 15-21.

#### **Session Two: “The Concept of Randomness and ‘Gamblification’”**

Discuss pages 37-41. Brain storm/share from group examples of Gambler’s Fallacy that they have experienced.

Discuss “gamblification” of other games – the process of introducing risk and chance with a financial reward – eg. Betting on random events or betting on the outcome of non-money based games (eg. Winners of board games or video games).

#### **Session Three: “The Cycle of Gambling Addiction”**

Discuss Pages 43 & 44. Particularly the Cycle Graphic. Hand Graphic out to each member. Complete worksheet on page 44 and discuss as a group.

At the end of session three, review resources such as local treatment provider contact information and [www.opgr.org](http://www.opgr.org).

### **Psychoeducation for Early Problem Gambling Recovery**

For program participants that have been identified as dealing with problem gambling, and have not yet been referred to Problem Gambling Specialty Treatment, an additional three sessions of Psychoeducation can be useful. The sessions can help provide insights and supports for the participant, while completing SUD treatment/and or waiting to start Problem Gambling Treatment.

After completing the three sessions of Psychoeducation for Problem Gambling Awareness, participants identified as dealing with Problem Gambling would benefit from continuing psychoeducation for three more sessions. A recommend curriculum is:

#### **Session Four: “Problem Gambling Recovery: Finding the Starting Point”**

Utilize the Stages of Change material and worksheets on pages 27 & 28 of “No Dice”

Complete and discuss the worksheet on page 32 of “No Dice”

Review and discuss participant concerns and thoughts on pages 33 to 36 of “No Dice”

#### **Session Five: “Triggers and Function of Gambling”**

Utilize worksheets on page 45 or 52 (Facilitators Choice) in discussion on identifying triggers.

Utilize worksheets on pages 46 – 51

#### **Session Six: “Money Matters and Problem Gambling”**

Review and discuss pages 97-101. Utilize worksheets on page 98.

Brainstorm ideas on effective money barriers.

*For participants that have been identified as dealing with Problem Gambling, OHA PGS recommends using the supplemental screening questions included at the back of this toolkit, if desired, to arrive at decisions on when and if to refer the client to specialty Problem Gambling Treatment. An SUD agency could develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with their local Problem Gambling Treatment provider that could permit treatment staff from that program to visit the SUD program to provide treatment, or arrange for the participant to travel to the Problem Gambling Treatment provider location.... Or, if appropriate, referral could be made as part of discharge planning.*

## Problem Gambling Specialty Treatment Referral Guidance

OHA PGS contracts with agencies and/or Counties that provide outpatient specialty Problem Gambling Treatment in virtually every Oregon County. OHA PGS recommends that SUD providers have an established connection with their local specialty Problem Gambling Treatment provider. The connection could be informal, or involve an MOU outlining a formal agreement around referrals and information support.

OHA PGS strongly encourages SUD programs to feel free to rely on local specialty Problem Gambling Treatment Providers for case consultation, staff training, and specialized treatment for program participants dealing with problem gambling.

Local specialty Problem Gambling Treatment provider contact information can be found through the treatment program locator at [www.opgr.org](http://www.opgr.org). Click 'Help for Gamblers' > 'Find a Meeting or Treatment Center' > scroll to middle of screen and click the 'Find a Treatment Center' tab.

<https://www.opgr.org/locate-services/>

OHA PGS recommends using the screening tool and supplement in this toolkit to assist in referral making decisions. A low to moderate risk may indicate a discharge referral, while a moderate to high risk may indicate parallel co-occurring treatment.

## Resources for Clinical Staff

The OHA PGS website ([www.oregon.gov/pgs](http://www.oregon.gov/pgs)) has resources and data for treatment providers, as well as information on OHA PGS system events and special trainings.

- Research and Fact Sheets: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/Problem-Gambling/Pages/Resources.aspx>
- Information for Problem Gambling Treatment Providers: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/Problem-Gambling/Pages/Treatment.aspx>
- Training for Oregon Counselors: <https://acorn.thinkific.com/pages/acorn-courses>
- Oregon Council on Problem Gambling: <https://oregoncpg.org/>
- National Council on Problem Gambling: <https://www.ncpgambling.org/>
- Evergreen Council on Problem Gambling (WA State): <https://www.evergreencpg.org/>
- MHACBO information on CGAC (Certified Gambling Addiction Counselor): <https://www.mhacbo.org/en/certifications/>

Client Agency & ID #:		Screener Name:		Date:	
<p><b>Gambling Brief Intervention &amp; Referral to Treatment (GBIRT) Screen</b>  Tool Adapted from BBGS Screen (Brief Biosocial Gambling Screen) and GBIRT screening tools: Iowa and Illinois.</p>					
<p>For the purpose of these questions, “gambling” means buying lottery tickets, gambling at a casino, playing cards or dice for money, betting on sports games, playing slot machines, video poker or other video gambling, gambling on the internet, betting on horses or dogs, playing bingo or keno.</p>					
During the past 12 months how many times have you gambled?				# of times ____	
<p><i>If gambled less than 5 times in past year, stop and conduct low risk intervention. If gambled 5 or more times in past year, then proceed to the following questions.</i></p>					
<b><u>DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS:</u></b>					
1	Have you ever felt restless, on edge or irritable when trying to stop or cut down on gambling?	Yes	No		
2	Have you tried to keep your family or friends from knowing how much you gamble?	Yes	No		
3	Have you had such financial trouble that you had to get help from family or friends?	Yes	No		
NOTE: If one “yes” answer, can refer to PG specialist at any time.				SUM:	

Notes:

**If one or more criteria are endorsed at any level of frequency/severity, individual is eligible for Problem Gambling Treatment Services in Oregon.**

- **Low Risk Intervention:** Money limits, time limits, can’t lose don’t play, other forms of recreation. Brain, Set, Setting. [www.opgr.org](http://www.opgr.org).
- **Moderate Risk Intervention:** One “yes”: Money limits, time limits, can’t lose don’t play, other forms of recreation. Brain, set, setting. [www.opgr.org](http://www.opgr.org) resource. Continuum of gambling, risk factors, conduct brief screen for PG in SUD’s (next page), provide treatment provider contact number provided for referral.
- **High Risk Intervention:** Two or three “yes” answers: Money limits, time limits, can’t lose don’t play, other forms of recreation, brain, set, setting. [www.opgr.org](http://www.opgr.org) resource. Continuum of gambling, risk factors, conduct brief screen for PG in SUD’s (next page), treatment provider contact number provided for referral. Direct connect referral if possible.



## **Brief Screen for PG in SUD's Settings**

- 1) Do you use alcohol and/or other drugs before, during or after you gamble?
- 2) Have you noticed any thresholds around your alcohol and/or drug use and gambling? For example - -how many drinks do you usually have before you decide to gamble? Or how long do you usually gamble for before you decide to have a drink?
- 3) Did you gamble before you started using alcohol and/or drugs? Which do you think became a "problem" first?
- 4) How do you feel your alcohol and/or drug use effects your gambling and vice versa?
- 5) Do you think that substance use is related to gambling? If so, do you think you want to or could make some changes with substance use without making changes to your gambling?

### **Notes to Clinician:**

- 1) *If gambling behavior seems more severe than SUD's **AND/OR** gambling behaviors seem to drive or cause substance use, OHA PGS recommends immediate referral to Problem Gambling Treatment.*
- 2) *If gambling behavior seems less severe than SUD's **AND/OR** substance use behaviors seem to drive or cause gambling behavior, OHA PGS recommends referral to Problem Gambling Treatment following discharge/completion of SUD's treatment.*

### **Additional Referral Information**

**Suicide Risk:** Have you wished you were dead or wished you could go to sleep and not wake up? If yes, have you thought about how you might do this?

**Problem Gambling Treatment History:** Have been to Problem Gambling treatment before, if yes where and when? What was your experience like?