

Nevada Problem Gambling Services

The State of Nevada joins virtually all states with legalized gambling (40 out of 48) in providing public funding for problem gambling services. Despite its status as the “gaming capital” of the nation, the state ranks 13th in the nation in per capita funding in this area, behind jurisdictions like Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, North Dakota, Iowa, and Delaware.

The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services invested approximately \$2M in SFY2020 on its problem gambling services. The gambling treatment data, gathered and evaluated independently by the UNLV International Gaming Institute, provided us with some encouraging outcomes. Over the past decade, more than 5,000 Nevadans received state-funded treatment, addressing issues that extended far beyond those of conventional therapy, including financial issues, job loss, legal troubles, divorce, physical health challenges, mental instability, and bankruptcy. The beneficiaries were diverse as the state itself on gender, race/ethnicity, and age variables. Approximately 68% of new treatment enrollees sought help for the first time.

Nevada’s who utilized these services faced many challenges; 78% of inpatient clients were unemployed, 13% lacked any health insurance, and 100% struggled with gambling related harms. Our evaluation research demonstrates gambling treatment positively changes lives:

Treatment Works*



“It saved my life. I hope they never go away. I can't express enough that they honestly did save my life. They actually gave me courage and hope and I didn't have that before I went in there.”

— Anonymous Client

82% of individuals with problem gambling reported reduction in symptoms and improved quality of life with treatments and supports (at 12-months post enrollment).

In Nevada, problem gambling treatment *works*, and problem gambling services are vital and commonplace for any state with legalized gambling revenues. In a manner befitting its role as the “gaming capital of the nation,” the State of Nevada bolsters its image and its social and economic responsibilities by supporting these essential and effective programs.

* Based on surveys conducted 12-months post enrollment with individuals who obtained DHHS supported problem gambling treatment. Dassopoulos, A. and Bernhard, B. (2020). *Annual Gambling Treatment System Performance Report*. Produced by the IGI, UNLV for the Nevada Department of Health and Human Services.