THE INSTITUTE FOR CONSUMER HEALTH

Problem Gambling Essentials for Clinicians

Winter 2026 Training

Dates: Tuesdays and Thursdays, January 13, 2026 through February 12, 2026
>   *Note: the second course is on a Wednesday, January 14, 2026*
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET   *Where noted length time per class can vary from 2- 4 hours*
Presenters: Eunice Aviles, Jody Bechtold, Lori Rugle, Katie Kirch, Jodie Nealley
CE Hours: 30.0

Description: Hidden problems with gambling often derail recovery from mental health and substance use disorders as signs and symptoms are often missed. This 10-session course, led by national experts, will build skills in gambling disorder assessment, treatment, and recovery support. By the end of the course, attendees will be confident in their ability to identify and respond appropriately to gambling disorder within their client populations. Continuing Education Units for this course can be applied towards the Vermont Problem Gambling Specialist Certificate and the IGCCB IGCG-1 certification. Classes will meet twice a week over 5 weeks.

Credit: CEU's will be granted at the rate of 2.0 to 4.0 CEU's per attendance at each live class for a total of 30 CE hours. If a course is missed, attendees will be able to watch the video of the missed course but not be able to receive CEU credit for any class not attended live.

Vermont OPR has approved CEU's for Alcohol and Drug Abuse Counselors, Psychological Examiners, Allied Mental Health Practitioners and Social Workers. Please check with The Institute for Consumer Health to confirm credit hours approved for each session.

Course *1 of 10:*
Course 1: Introduction to Problem Gambling
Trainer: Jodie Nealley
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Tuesday January 13, 2026

Description: In the era of expanding gambling, providers are encouraged to increase their base of knowledge to provide service and support to service recipients. This introductory training is aimed to increase current social service providers' knowledge in identifying problem gambling behavior within clinical and social service practice. Social service providers will learn how to incorporate problem gambling information and treatment skills into their area of practice. They will hear the presenter describe her own journey into gambling addiction and her personal path to recovery.

120 Washington St., Suite 202, Salem, Massachusetts 01970 Phone: 617-426-4554 Website: www.maccg.org
An affiliate of the National Council on Problem Gambling, Inc.
If you are deaf or hard of hearing, or are a person with a disability who requires an accommodation, please contact:
Chief of Programs, Odessa Dwarika at 617.426.4554, TTY: 617.426.1855 or odessa@maccg.org

Learning Objectives:
- Discuss history and development of the problem gambling field.
- Review stages, signs, symptoms, and progression of problem gambling.
- Review and discuss research reports of prevalence rates with respect to problem gambling.
- Explain risk factors associated with different types of gambling.

Citations:

American Psychiatric Association (2022). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental health disorders (5th ed., text rev.). https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787

Menchon, J. M., Mestre-Bach, G., Steward, T., Fernández-Aranda, F., & Jiménez-Murcia, S. (2018). An overview of gambling disorder: from treatment approaches to risk factors. *F1000Research*, *7*, 434.

Penfold, K., Nicklin, L. L., Chadwick, D., & Lloyd, J. (2024). Gambling harms, stigmatisation and discrimination: A qualitative naturalistic forum analysis. *PloS one*, *19*(12), e0315377.

Course *2 of 10:*
Course 2: Gambling as a Co-Occurring Disorder
Trainer: Dr. Lori Rugle
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Wednesday January 14, 2026

Description: This training will review the risk for gambling problems as a co-occurring issue among individuals seeking primary treatment for substance use, mental health and medical disorders. Strategies for screening for gambling problems in these at-risk populations will be presented, and case examples will be presented to explore ways to enhance client motivation to address gambling issues and risks.

Learning Objectives:
- Describe similarities and differences with substance use and mental health disorders and evidence for risk for gambling problems among those seeking help for primary substance use, mental health and medical disorders.
- Describe strategies for identifying and screening for gambling problems in these at-risk groups.
- Using case examples explore strategies for integrating the issue of problem gambling with treatment for primary substance use and mental health disorders.

Citations:

 Alegria, M., Jackson, J. S., Kessler, R. C., & Takeuchi, D. (2015). United States national comorbidity survey: Replication 2001-2003 [United States]. ICPSR20240-v7. Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research.

Black, D. W., Shaw, M., McCormick, B., & Allen, J. Pathological gambling: Relationship to obesity, self-reported chronic medical conditions, poor lifestyle choices, and impaired quality of life. Comprehensive Psychiatry, 54(2), 97–104.

Heinlein E, **Rugle L**, Potts W, Welsh C, Himelhoch **S**. (2021) A within-subject feasibility study of a gambling specific SBIRT intervention delivered in an urban HIV/primary clinic. *J Gambl Stud,* https://doi.org/10-1007/s10899-021-10031-4.

Kessler RC, Hwnt I, LaBrie R et al. (2008). The prevalence and correlates of DSM-IV pathological gambling in the national comorbidity survey replication. *Psychol Med*, 38(9), 1351-60.

Course *3 of 10:*
Course 3: Assessment and Diagnosis
Trainer: Katie Kirch
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Tuesday January 20, 2026

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Description: This training will focus on the assessment and diagnosis of gambling disorder as a behavioral addiction. The process of the therapeutic alliance and other engagement practices will be considered as important components of the assessment process. The evaluation of major depressive disorder and the risk for suicidality will be highlighted as important aspects of the assessment process with a problem gambler. The development of a safety plan will be discussed as a consideration for the protection of the problem gambler.

Learning Objectives:
- Describe DSM-5 diagnostic criteria for Gambling Disorder.
- Explain what the various screening tools are and their strengths and weaknesses.
- Develop a deeper understanding of Process Addictions and gain tools to use with clients
- Discuss requirements and benefits of IGCCB certification for clinicians.

Citations:
Bojana, K. & Lidgerwood, D. M. (2012). Gambling severity, impulsivity, and psychopathology: Comparison of treatment and community recruited pathological gamblers, The American journal on addictions, 21, 508515.
Dowling, N. A. & Cosic, S. (2011). Client engagement characteristics. International journal of mental health addiction, 9, 656671
Petry, N. (2005). Pathological gambling: Etiology, comorbidity, and treatment. Washington DC: American Psychological Association.

Course *4 of 10:*
Course *4*: Ethics, Legal System and Future Trends
Trainer: Jody Bechtold
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Thursday January 22, 2026
Part 1: Ethics in Problem Gambling Treatment
Description: This presentation covers ethics in the field of counseling, particularly for those working with clients with gambling disorders. It emphasizes the importance of counselors practicing within their areas of competence and continually developing their professional expertise.
The presentation outlines specific ethical codes from various professional organizations, including the NASW, APA, ACA, and IGCCB. These codes address issues such as competence, boundaries, confidentiality, and non-discrimination.
The IGCCB code of ethics, in particular, emphasizes the importance of ongoing education, cultural sensitivity, and upholding legal and moral codes.
The presentation also discusses the challenges of getting insurance reimbursement for gambling disorder treatment, as it is not always recognized as a primary diagnosis.
A case study is presented involving a client in recovery for gambling disorder who has relapsed and does not want their spouse to be informed. This raises ethical considerations around informed consent, confidentiality, and competence.

Learning Objectives:
- Understand the ethical codes and standards relevant to counseling, especially for gambling disorders.
- Recognize the importance of ongoing education and cultural sensitivity in ethical practice.
- Navigate the complexities of insurance reimbursement for gambling disorder treatment.
- Apply ethical decision-making frameworks to real-world case studies.

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American Psychological Association. (2017). *Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct.* https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/ethics-code-2017.pdf

National Association of Social Workers. (2021). Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers. https://www.socialworkers.org/About/Ethics/Code-of-Ethics/Code-of-Ethics-English

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2017). *Does HIPAA provide extra protections for mental health information compared with other health information?* https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/faq/2088/does-hipaa-provide-extra-protections-mental-health-information-compared-other-health.html

Part 2: The Legal System and Problem Gambling

Description: This training is designed to help clinicians navigate the complexities of interacting with the legal system when working with clients who have gambling disorders. Clinicians may be called upon to provide testimony as either a treating clinician or a forensic expert, necessitating an understanding of gambling-motivated crimes, which are typically non-violent and financially motivated. When acting as a witness, clinicians must provide factual evidence in concise reports, including assessment summaries, relevant test results, and any mitigating conditions. Thorough assessments are crucial, and should include the use of valid and reliable instruments, DSM-5 criteria, and consideration of co-occurring disorders. In some cases, alternative sentencing strategies may be appropriate, and clinicians can provide recommendations for treatment, 12-step programs, and financial plans. Probation and parole reporting should be factual, and clinicians should be aware of the potential for countertransference. Informed consent is also a key aspect of working with these clients, and clinicians should have a thorough understanding of their clients' legal situations. Overall, clinicians should maintain best practices and be prepared to interact with the legal system at any point in their work with clients with gambling disorders.

Learning Objectives:
- Understand the clinician's role as a witness of fact in court proceedings, including the need for factual, concise reporting and the use of relevant assessment tools.
- Identify the elements of a thorough assessment for gambling disorders, including the use of valid and reliable instruments, DSM-5 criteria, and consideration of co-occurring disorders.
- Develop appropriate recommendations for alternative sentencing strategies, such as treatment plans, 12-step programs, and financial plans, when working with clients who have committed gambling-motivated crimes.
- Maintain best practices in documentation, reporting, and informed consent to ensure ethical and legally sound interactions with the legal system.

Citations:

Malkin, M. L., Bechtold, J., Wilson, A., & Moss, C. (2022). *Gambling-motivated crime: What every clinician should know.* [Pre-conference session]. NCPG National Conference on Gambling Addiction and Responsible Gambling, Boston, MA, United States.

Adolphe, A., Khatib, L., van Golde, C., Gainsbury, S. M., & Blaszczynski, A. (2019). Crime and gambling disorders: A systematic review. Journal of Gambling Studies, 35(2), 395–414. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-018-9794-7

Bechtold, J., & Wilson, A. (2021). The gambling disorder treatment handbook: A guide for mental health professionals. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Banks, J. (2017). Gambling, crime and society. Palgrave Macmillan London. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-57994-2

Part 3: Future Trends

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Description: This workshop explores the convergence of gaming and gambling, emphasizing the need for clinical awareness of this trend as it exposes young people to gambling mechanics and risks. It outlines diagnostic criteria for gambling and internet gaming disorders and explores the concept of "gamblification," where game design incorporates chance-based systems and microtransactions. The presentation concludes by discussing the importance of financial literacy and ethical considerations in addressing problem gambling, particularly in the context of evolving technologies like cryptocurrency.

Learning Objectives:
- Define "gamblification" and identify its key components within video games.
- Describe the diagnostic criteria for gambling disorder and internet gaming disorder, highlighting their similarities and differences.
- Discuss the ethical implications of the convergence of gaming and gambling, particularly concerning young people.
- Develop strategies for addressing problem gambling and promoting financial literacy in the context of evolving technologies like cryptocurrency.

Citations:

Brock, T., & Johnson, M. (2021). The gamblification of digital games. Journal of Consumer Culture, 21(1), 3-13. https://doi.org/10.1177/1469540521993904

American Psychiatric Association (2022). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental health disorders (5th ed., text rev.). https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787

Macey, J., Abarbanel, B., & Hamari, J. (2021). What predicts esports betting? A study on consumption of video games, esports, gambling and demographic factors. *New media & society*, *23*(6), 1481-1505.

Course *5 of 10:*
Course 5: Neurobiology and Pharmacology and Harm Reduction
Trainer: Dr. Lori Rugle
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Tuesday January 27, 2026

Part 1: Neurobiology and Pharmacology
Description: Much has been learned in the last 40 years regarding the neurobiology of gambling and gambling disorder through neuropsychological assessment, neuroimaging studies and genetic studies. This workshop will review the research and discuss clinical implications. Sections of a client psychoeducational manual on gambling and the brain will be presented. Additionally pharmacological interventions for gambling disorder will be reviewed.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will be able to identify brain regions involved in the development of a gambling disorder.
- Participants will be able to identify primary neurotransmitters involved in gambling behaviors
- Participants will be able to describe the impact of gambling on the brain in terms clients can understand.
- Participants will be able to identify medications that have been found to be most effective in the treatment of gambling disorder

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Balodis, I. M., Kober, H., Worhunsky, P. D., Stevens, M. C., Pearlson, G. D., Carroll, K. M., & Potenza, M. N. (2016). Neurofunctional reward processing changes in cocaine dependence during recovery. *Neuropsychopharmacology, 41*(8), 2112–2121.

Barton, K. R., Yazdani, Y., Ayer, N., Kalvapalle, S., Brown, S., Stapleton, J., Brown, D. G., & Harrigan, K. A. (2017). The effect of losses disguised as wins and near misses in electronic gaming machines: A systematic review. *Journal of Gambling Studies, 33*, 1241–1260.

Goslar, M., Leibetseder, M., Muench, H. M., Hofmann, S. G., & Laireiter, A.-R. (2019). Pharmacological treatments for disordered gambling: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Gambling Studies, 35*(2), 415–445.

Zois, E., Kiefer, K., Lemenager, T., Vollstädt-Klein, S., Mann, K., & Fauth-Bühler, M. (2017). Frontal cortex gray matter volume alterations in pathological gambling occur independently from substance use disorder. *Addiction Biology, 22*(3), 864–872.

Part 2: Harm Reduction

Description: Harm reduction is often a misunderstood concept in the treatment of addictive disorders generally and gambling disorder specifically. This workshop will explore a wide range of strategies to reduce the harm of gambling and problematic gambling from a prevention perspective to a clinical/intervention perspective in the context of controlled/limited gambling and abstinence-based goals. Harm reduction through alternative pathways from traditional treatment such as natural recovery will also be discussed.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will be able to define the scope of harm reduction in the prevention and treatment of problem gambling.
- Participants will explore their personal attitude and reaction to harm reduction interventions in the treatment of gambling disorder.
- Participants will be able to utilize harm reduction strategies with individuals who have limited gambling or abstinence treatment goals.
- Participants will be able to identify alternatives to treatment interventions such as natural recovery as harm reduction strategies.

Citations:

Browne, M., & Rockloff, M. (2017). Prevalence of gambling -related harm provides evidence for the prevention paradox*. J Behav Addict*, 7(2), 410-422.

Langham, E., Thorne, H., Browne, M., Donaldson, P., & Rockloff, M. (2015). Understanding gambling related harm: A proposed definition, conceptual framework, and taxonomy of harms. *BMC Public Health, 16*(80).

Stea, J., Hodgins, DC., Fung, T. (2015). Abstinence versus moderation goals in brief motivational treatment for pathological gambling. *J Gambl Stud*, 31, 1029-1045.

Course *6 of 10:*
Course 6: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and LGBTQ Cultural Competence (Note: This is a 4-hour class)
Trainer: Dr. Eunice Aviles
Time: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm ET   *Note: This is a 4-hour class*
Date: Thursday January 29, 2026

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Description: Several interventions have been utilized for the treatment of problem gambling. This training will list some of these evidence-based interventions with a focus on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). A review and discussion of CBT will provide practical information that will allow clinical insight into treating the problem gambler. This will include a special session on creating safe therapeutic spaces for LGBTQ clients.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will explain Cognitive Behavioral Therapy as a leading evidence-based modality in the treatment of gambling disorder.
- Participants will identify various clinical challenges of working with people with a gambling disorder.
- Participants will identify three considerations for increasing cultural safety for clients identifying as LQBTQ.

Citations:
Ojuda, M., Balán, I., Petry, N.M., Oquendo, M. & Blanco, C. (2009). Cognitive-behavioral therapy for pathological gambling: Cultural considerations. *The American Journal of Psychiatry, 166* (12), 1325-1330. DOI: 10.1176/appi.ajp.2009.08081235
Prochaska, J.O. & DiClemente, C.C. (1982). Transtheoretical therapy: Toward a more integrative model of change. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research & Practice, 19* (3), 276–288. DOI: 10.1037/h0088437
Gooding, P. & Tarrier, N. (2009). A systematic review and meta-analysis of cognitive-behavioural interventions to reduce problem gambling: Hedging our bets? *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 47* (7), 592-607. DOI: 10.1016/j.brat.2009.04.002

Course *7 of 10:*
Course 7: Not All Bets Are the Same: A Targeted Intervention Guide for Specific Types of Bettors
Trainer: Katie Kirch
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Tuesday February 3, 2026

Description: This training is designed to help clinical direct care staff to learn specific, effective, interventions for different types of bettors to help reduce or eliminate gambling episodes throughout their treatment. Participants will learn how to help clients create crucial barriers to gambling early on in treatment based on the client's game of choice, as well as frequently used interventions including Motivational Interviewing and establishing SMART treatment goals.

Learning Objectives
- Identify 2 interventions to use with people experiencing harm from different types of betting: casino, off track, sports wagering and lottery.
- Learn at least 4 different treatment plan goals to set for clients with a Gambling Disorder.
- Identify 3 types of boundaries to implement with family members.
- Explore how Motivational Interviewing can be helpful when working with those who prefer harm reduction over abstinence. Give an example of Motivational Interviewing within the context of problem gambling.

Citations:
https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190620-samhsa-strategic-prevention-framework-guide.pdf
Reid R., Fong, T. (2013). Helping Partners in a relationship with a Problem Gambler. UCLA Gambling Studies Program
Bechtold, J., Wilson A. (2021). The Gambling Disorder Treatment Handbook. A Guide for Mental Health Professionals

Course *8 of 10:*
Course 8: Case Studies – Applications
Trainer: Jody Bechtold
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Thursday February 5, 2026

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Description: This training outlines a series of case studies for training therapists in treating gambling disorders. The case studies cover diverse demographics such as adolescents, older adults, women, cultural minorities, trauma survivors, individuals with chronic illnesses, and those involved in the criminal justice or military systems. Each case study includes sections on background, presenting problem, DSM criteria, other assessments, and treatment plans. Learners are asked to identify DSM criteria and treatment plan options based on their knowledge. A comprehensive summary of the case is then provided, followed by reflection questions for discussion based on the student's own expertise and training. The training emphasizes the importance of understanding the unique needs and challenges of each individual when developing a treatment plan and providing treatment.

Learning Objectives:
- Identify DSM-5 criteria for gambling disorder and apply them to diverse client profiles.
- Develop comprehensive, individualized treatment plans that address gambling disorder while considering co-occurring factors such as trauma, chronic illness, or legal issues.
- Incorporate evidence-based practices, including CBT, ACT, motivational interviewing, and mindfulness techniques, into treatment plans for gambling disorder.
- Demonstrate cultural competence and sensitivity when working with clients from diverse backgrounds, including considerations for age, gender, ethnicity, and veteran status.

Citations:

Thomas, M. D., O'Connor, F. W., Albert, M. L., Boutain, D., & Brandt, P. A. (2001). Case-based teaching and learning experiences. *Issues in mental health nursing*, *22*(5), 517-531.

Bowe, C. M., Voss, J., & Thomas Aretz, H. (2009). Case method teaching: an effective approach to integrate the basic and clinical sciences in the preclinical medical curriculum. *Medical teacher*, *31*(9), 834-841.

Bonnaire, C., & Billieux, J. (2022). A process-based analysis of the pathways model of problem gambling through clinical case formulations. *International Gambling Studies*, *22*(2), 222-246.

Course *9 of 10:*
Course 9: Finances and Families (Two parts)
Trainer: Dr. Lori Rugle
Time: 10:00 am to 1:00 pm ET
Date: Tuesday February 10, 2026

Part 1: Addressing Finances in the Treatment of Gambling Disorder
Description: Financial problems are often the key motivator for individuals to seek treatment for a gambling disorder and certainly one of the primary concerns of those who are in treatment for a gambling disorder. There is little empirical research however on the impact of addressing financial problems as a key part of the treatment of this disorder. This training will present the best clinical and recovery-oriented practices for working with clients experiencing gambling problems to address the stress of financial problems and to develop their financial recovery.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will be able to define the role of addressing finances in the treatment of gambling disorder.
- Participant will be able to identify key steps in structuring addressing financial issues in the treatment of gambling disorder.
- Participants will be able to identify key financial issues to address in family counseling around problem gambling.

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- Participants will learn strategies for financial asset protection planning with families addressing problem gambling.

Citations:

Grant, JE.,Schreiber, L., Odlaug, BL., Kim, SW. (2010). Pathological gambling and bankruptcy, *Compr Psychiatry,* 51(2), 115-120.

Koomson, I., Hucrchill, SA., Munyani, ME. (2022). Gambling and financial stress, *Social Indicators Research,* https//doi.org/10.1007/s11do5-022-02898-6

Sacco, P., Frey, JJ., Callahan, C., Hochheimer, M., Imboden, R., Hyde, D. (2019). Feasibility of brief screening for at-risk gambling in consumer credit counseling. *J of Gambl Stud*, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-019-09836-1.

Part 2: New Strategies in Helping Families and Loved Ones Addressing Problem Gambling
Description: Families and loved ones living with the issue of problem gambling experience a broad range painful harms including financial, emotional, social and spiritual and are often left feeling shame and isolation. They often do not know where to turn for help, support and understanding. This webinar will focus on how the evidence-based treatments such as Community Reinforcement and Family Treatment and other behavioral family counseling strategies combine compassion-based, motivational and behavioral perspectives can be applied to those living with gambling disorder.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will be able to utilize strategies to help family members reinforce recovery-oriented behaviors in loved ones struggling with gambling disorder.
- Participants will be able to identify how traditional language of co-dependency may contribute to stigma of families and couples living with addictive disorders.
- Participants will learn strategies to assist family members in developing self-compassion and self-care.
- Participants will learn strategies to help family members in developing coping skills to address difficult feelings, honesty and trust issues, and compassionate communication.

Citations:

Meyers, R., Miller, W. R., Hill, D. E., & Tonigan, J. S. (1998). Community reinforcement and family training (CRAFT): Engaging unmotivated drug users in treatment. *Journal of Substance Abuse, 10*(3), 291–308.

Nilsson, A., Magnusson, K., Carlbring, P., Andersson, G., & Hellner Gumpert, C. (2018). The development of an internet-based treatment for problem gamblers and concerned significant others: A pilot randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Gambling Studies, 34*, 539–559.

Svensson, J., Romild, U., & Shepherdson, E. (2013). The concerned significant others of people with gambling problems in a national representative sample in Sweden: A 1 year follow-up study. *BMC Public Health, 13*, 1087.

Course 10 of 10:
Course 10: Integrating Recovery Supports into Clinical Practice (Note: This is a 2-hour class)
Trainer: Jodie Nealley
Time: 10:00 am to 12:00 pm ET   *Note: This is a 2-hour class*
Date: Thursday February 12, 2026

Description: Recovery support services are an integral part of a recovery-oriented system of care. The question then becomes, which supports to use and how to integrate them into a treatment process. This session will discuss several recovery support services, offer suggestions as to who should be offering them, and discuss how services can be integrated into the treatment of clients with gambling disorders. We will also explore harm reduction within the recovery continuum

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and how to support clients on their preferred path to well-being. We will discuss the role of Voluntary Self Exclusion in the context of both harm reduction and recovery.

Learning Objectives:
- Participants will understand definitions of recovery and describe recovery-oriented systems of care.
- Participants will identify dozens of recovery support services to share with clients.
- Participants will be able to describe the different needs of clients desiring to engage in harm reduction from the needs of clients desiring to be abstinent from gambling and how to support multiple pathways to recovery and client safety.
- Participants will learn how to conduct a Voluntary Self Exclusion and apply to become a designated agent for Vermont.

Citations:
Coelho, S. G., Tabri, N., Kerman, N., Lefebvre, T., Longpre, S., Williams, R. J., & Kim, H. S. (2024). The perceived causes of problems with substance use, gambling, and other behavioural addictions from the perspective of people with lived experience: A mixed-methods investigation. *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction*, *22*(1), 722-745.
Kraus, L., Bickl, A. M., Hellman, M., Kankainen, V. E., Loy, J. K., Neyer, M., ... & Cisneros Örnberg, J. (2024). Voluntary self-exclusion from gambling: Expert opinions on gaps and needs for improvement. *Nordic Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, *41*(5), 491-508.
Tulloch, C., Browne, M., Rockloff, M., Hing, N., & Hilbrecht, M. (2025). The roles of coping style and social support in the experience of harm and distress among people affected by another person's gambling. *Addictive Behaviors*, *162*, 108236.

Winter 2026 Training Institute Trainers:

Dr. Eunice Avilés, **Psy.D** has a doctorate in Clinical Psychology, is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor, a Licensed Professional Counselor, a Gender Specialist, a certified Sex Educator, and an AASECT Certified Sex Therapist. Dr. Avilés' general practice focuses on the treatment of depression, anxiety, trauma, problem gambling, and the emotional consequences of discrimination and bullying (for youths and adults). Her private practice with the transgender and gender non-binary community includes the evaluation and treatment of children, youth and adults presenting with gender dysphoria. She specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of sexual dysfunction as well as sexual orientation issues. She is innovative and her focus is on ensuring that clinical services, as well as professional training for her areas of expertise, are provided in-person and online.

Jody Bechtold, **LCSW, ICGC-II, BACC** is the CEO and Founder, Better Institute and presents both nationally and internationally about education and treatment for problem gambling. She serves as a board member for the International Gambling Counselor Certification Board (IGCCB). Jody earned her bachelor's degree in business administration and her Masters in Social Work from the University of Pittsburgh. She is a graduate of the Professional coaching certification from Duquesne University School of Leadership & Professional Advancement. For her work in prevention, education, and training, Jody was awarded the Joanna Franklin Direct Service Award at the 2022 NCPG Conference. She received the "Person of the Year" award from the Pennsylvania Council on Compulsive Gambling in 2011. She is co-author of the Gambling Disorder Treatment Handbook: A Guide for Mental Health Professionals (2021). She has co-authored two chapters in the Social Workers Desk Reference, Fourth Edition (2021).

Katie Kirch, LCSW, ICGC-II, BACC is a 2011 Graduate of the UCONN School of Social Work and received her LCSW in 2013 where she worked as a therapist for the Bettor Choice gambling treatment program at The Connection Inc., in Middletown, CT. From there, she has gone on to become the Program Manager for The Bettor Choice Program at

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Wheeler Clinic in Hartford, CT. As an Internationally Certified Gambling Counselor, she has dedicated her career to helping those affected by Gambling Disorders in the state of CT. Katie has continued to develop her professional skills by becoming an EMDR therapist and an Acupuncture Detox Specialist and has taught Social Work courses as an Adjunct Professor at the UCONN School of Social Work in Hartford, CT.

Jodie Nealley, M.S. Jodie has a Bachelor of Arts from St. Lawrence University, a Master of Science in Education from Indiana University and is a graduate of the UMass/Boston Addiction Counselor Education Program. Jodie joined MACGH in the Fall of 2012 where she works as the Director of Recovery Services. Her responsibilities include assisting in the delivery of gambling related trainings aimed at capacity building for providers and serving as primary liaison for voluntary self-exclusion follow ups and the telephone recovery support program. She is responsible for all recovery initiatives, interacting with regional peer recovery centers to raise awareness about gambling disorder, coordinate and develop recovery support resources and services for individuals seeking services. Jodie speaks on recovery-oriented panels, has been a keynote speaker and published articles for the About College publication and The Wager. She also co-authored chapter in: *Responsible Gambling: Primary Stakeholder Perspectives* and uses her life experience as a recovering alcoholic and compulsive gambler to raise awareness and compassion wherever possible. In 2019 she received the National Council on Problem Gambling *Jeff Beck Recovery Ambassador* award.

Dr. Lori Rugle PhD, ICGC-II/BACC, brings 35 + years of experience to her work field of problem and responsible gambling including treatment, prevention, research and responsible gambling. She is certified in Meditation and Psychotherapy and has had a personal practice for the past 25 years. She co-founded 12 Step Buddhist Recovery groups in both Connecticut and Ohio. She has provided training internationally on the use of mindfulness and self-compassion based interventions in the treatment of gambling disorder.

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