

Journal Information

Journal ID (publisher-id): jgi

ISSN: 1910-7595

Publisher: Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

Article Information

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Received Day: 18 Month: March Year: 2001

Publication date: May 2001

Publisher Id: jgi.2001.4.19

DOI: 10.4309/jgi.2001.4.19

Gambling Information and Counseling Services

Linnea W. Powell, CSW-R

Affiliation: 1411 Genesee Street, Utica, NY, USA 13501, Office: (315) 732-3920, Fax: (315) 732-5436, E-mail: linneap@htcorp.net

*This Service Profile was not peer-reviewed.**We invite clinicians from around the world to tell our readers about their problem gambling treatment programs. To make a **submission**, please contact the editor at Phil_Lange@camh.net.*

Program Description

Gambling Information and Counseling Services (GICS) is a Division of Human Technologies Corp., in Utica, NY. GICS, a not-for-profit service, provides counseling services for gamblers, their families and others affected by gambling. GICS also provides educational and informational presentations. It currently provides group services for inmates in one New York State correctional facility. The counselors, through Volunteer Services at the prison, hold a ten-week module with inmates who have been evaluated as having problems with gambling behaviors. We are the only service of this kind in the New York State prison system. Our program is one of eight funded by a grant through the New York State legislature and overseen by the Office of Mental Health. GICS services several counties in central New York.

Philosophy of Service

We work closely with the New York Council on Problem Gambling. Our objective is to provide help to those who are adversely affected by gambling. The New York legislature acknowledges that legalized gambling can be a problem for some and offers a grant for these services. We provide services regardless of one's inability to pay for services. We mainly offer weekly and hourly counseling sessions that address gambling behavior and imbalances in one's life that make it difficult to abstain from gambling (gambling is often a symptom of other problems). We also run group sessions as needed.

Profiles of Our Services

Our program staff consists of two CSW (New York State Certified Social Worker) providers. One worker is solely involved in counseling and the other is the co-ordinator, who does some educational programming and administration as well as counseling. Both staff members have worked in family, individual and couple counseling before this position, We have a co-operative working relationship with Gamblers' Anonymous and provide a facility for GA meetings.

Description of Our Clients

Clients are self-referred, family-referred and referred from other sources such as the judicial system, human services and the medical community. Clients of all ages are served and couples and families receive counseling as needed.

Program Evaluations and Research Involvement

Statistical information is compiled by the New York Council for Problem Gambling and the Office of Mental Health and used for evaluation and research studies. New York Corrections is also using information from our prison group for their own evaluation studies.

Article Categories:

- Profile