annual REPORT 2012

FISCAL YEAR 2012   JULY 1, 2011 - JUNE 30, 2012

Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling
We understand the problem. We can help.
People in Crisis Restored by Retreat

20 PEOPLE TAKE THE WEEKEND OFF FROM THEIR GAMBLING

People in crisis with gambling problems have very few treatment options in the Commonwealth. Currently there are no in-patient treatment centers for individuals in Massachusetts, and out of state facilities are often cost-prohibitive. Offering people in crisis the opportunity to take the weekend off from their gambling in a serene environment, ideal for introspection, was a long-time goal of the Council’s. Your First Step to Change: a Gambling-Free Weekend Retreat was held at the International in Bolton, MA in November 2011.

The retreat provided much needed support to individuals directly impacted by gambling disorders. Each of the 20 participants, made up of people in crisis with a gambling disorder and their support person, attended workshops, meetings and activities aimed at introducing, addressing and encouraging recovery.

Among workshops offered were Decision Making; Whose Problem is it Anyway? and Not Betting No Matter What. In addition, all participants were offered the opportunity to participate in clinical consultations aimed at connecting individuals to recovery resources.

The retreat allowed the Council to provide recovery awareness and direct support to people struggling with problem gambling and their families.

One participant shared, “I am so grateful for the compassion and the commitment of the presenters and the Council. The facilitators were way beyond my expectations. I feel very comfortable with my journey to recovery now, taking it one day at a time due to this retreat.”

The Council plans to repeat this program in March 2013.

“The retreat was very beneficial for me. I am in recovery and after this weekend I can honestly say that I will stay this way.”

“From the beginning, I felt I was in a knowledgeable, nurturing, caring and non-judgmental environment. I felt welcomed and that I was among people who encouraged me to be open and honest about my gambling addiction.”

To learn about the Council Board of Directors and Staff Members, please visit the Council’s website at www.masscompulsivegambling.org
Casinos Coming to MASSACHUSETTS

In FY12, Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick signed a bill that legalized casinos in the Commonwealth. The bill represents the largest expansion of gambling in Massachusetts since the creation of the state lottery in 1971. Three casinos and one slots parlor are permitted by the new law, which splits the state into three geographic regions and allows for no more than one casino in each.

One of the first pieces of the legislation that was put into place was the formation of a new 5-member Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC), charged with selecting which casinos will be awarded licenses in Massachusetts and with overseeing the industry.

Commission Chairman, Stephen Crosby said, “The prospect of tax revenue for state government would not be an ‘offset’ for potential harm to ‘the public good.’ Legislators say that it will be a year before the slots parlor would open and that the casinos could take three or more years to open.

The Council is working closely with the Commission and facilitated the MGC Forum on Problem Gambling held in Lynn, MA in June, which attracted both media exposure and the attendance of more than 100 audience members.

In addition, the Council attended Casino Task Force meetings throughout the state.

FUNDING PROBLEM GAMBLING SERVICES

At the end of fiscal year 2012, Governor Deval Patrick signed the FY2013 budget with problem gambling services funded at $1,830,000. This is the largest line item that problem gambling services has ever received in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Legislators explored a wide variety of gambling issues in 2012, from the casino compact to cyber café legislation. They have fought for services for people experiencing problems with gambling, and the Council is grateful.

In 2013, the Council turns its attention to the careful planning and implementation to best use these additional dollars to strengthen current programs and to develop new systems that build the capacity of the prevention, intervention and treatment systems in Massachusetts.

Some of the FY13 highlights include:

- An increase in regional professional training opportunities for clinicians
- Expanded capacity at the Your First Step to Change weekend retreat for people in early recovery
- Data collection and dissemination projects, such as: a statewide public opinion poll, an insurance survey, data on population-specific gambling disorders, and updated fact sheets
- Building the capacity of emergency clinical response teams and training new clinical professionals
- Additional prevention programs for populations at high-risk for developing problems with gambling
- Expanded promotion of Helpline and online chat services
The Council is committed to training treatment providers to address problem gambling. One way that the Council accomplished this was by bringing “Bait & Hook” to Massachusetts General Hospital.

“Bait & Hook” is a dramatic performance about gambling’s impact upon older adults. Eighty social workers came to the show to learn about the disorder.

Other trainings presented to clinicians in 2012 included:

- “Recognizing and Managing Countertransference in Problem Gambling Clinical Work,” online training.
- “Introduction for Screening and Treatment of Gambling Disorders,” Canton
- “Incorporating Financial Literacy into Clinical Practice,” Canton
- “Understanding and Recognizing Financial Warning Signs in Problem Gambling” at American Consumer Credit Counseling, West Newton
- “Treatment Capacity Building in the Era of Expanding Gambling” at the Provider Council Conference, Boston

In addition, Council staff met with clinical providers regarding implementation of problem gambling services at 17 health centers in 2012, including: Genesis Counseling Services, Framingham; Hallmark HealthCare, Reading; Regional Health Dialogues, Braintree and Chelsea Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program (ASAP), Chelsea.

As a result of these efforts, 18 new providers earned their Massachusetts Problem Gambling Specialist (MAPGS) certificate and 24 clinicians renewed their certificates.
On Friday, March 30, 2012 Boston funny men Steve Sweeney, Johnny Pizzi, Chris D., and Danny Miller hosted a comedy night to benefit the Council at Lots of Laughs Comedy Lounge at the China Blossom in North Andover.

“The Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a great organization with dedicated, hard-working staff members and volunteers who do a lot of good work for people who have problems with gambling. We are really happy to have the opportunity to support this group,” said comedian, Johnny Pizzi.

The event was a great success, raising more than $1,500 to benefit problem gambling services in the Commonwealth.

**FUN NIGHT for a Great Cause**

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**Council launches problem gambling website FOR TEENS**

*Teens Know Your Limits* is a website for teens interested in learning about gambling and in turn, its associated risks. The website was designed to appeal to teens with lots of graphics, color and flash. It is easily navigated with limited text.

The website will serve as a place where teens from all over the United States will go for information. The Council hopes that it will evolve into an online community forum where youth will go to share their thoughts and ideas on problem gambling.

Some of the highlights of the site include:

- An interactive “Games & Quizzes” section with interactive games that while fun, also teach teens about problem gambling vocabulary and facts
- “Share Your Stuff” encourages teens to share their creativity by submitting artwork – like photos and artwork
- Links to popular social media sites, including facebook, and Blogspot
- The “Council Programs” page highlights three youth programs sponsored by the Council
- The “How to Help Others” section explains the difference between risk and protective factors, tips on how to reduce risk, and where to go for help
- “For Parents” and “For Educators” sections.
“Why isn’t the Council against gambling?” It’s a question that the Mass. Council is often asked and one that Council Executive Director, Marlene Warner answers. “At the Council we listen, we help, we refer. We would not be an effective advocate if we were radical in support or opposition of gambling. We must remain neutral in order to be accessible to the people in need; however, I direct people to the work of both sides for their own personal advocacy. The work of those in opposition to gambling is important and admirable, as is the work of the responsible gambling individuals working within the industry. Their positions allow us to stay in the middle, meet at the table, and provide a voice and services to those whose personal struggles with this disease often go unnoticed and unheard,” she explains.

The Council re-convened a meeting of the Massachusetts Partnership on Responsible Gambling (MPRG) at the Massachusetts State Lottery offices in Braintree. Twenty people attended the meeting including representatives from the Lottery, Casino City Press, the Massachusetts Convenience Store Association, Ameristar Casinos, Mohegan Sun, Plainridge Racecourse, Suffolk Downs, MCM Casino, and the Massachusetts Gaming Commission.

The group conducted a brainstorming exercise to update the mission, vision, and proposed projects for the Partnership with the new reality of expanded gambling. Some of the ideas discussed included:

- Training employees at casinos in an effort to minimize harms
- Advocating for education and treatment and increasing public awareness
- Incorporating problem gambling services into more mental health and substance abuse agencies
- Developing an integrated system of best practices

The Council is working with the MPRG to determine future activities, goals and membership.
On June 1, the Council held the “2012 Massachusetts Problem Gambling Symposium” at the University of Massachusetts Amherst’s Marriott Center. More than 100 people were in attendance to learn about addressing problems associated with disordered gambling.

The goal of the Symposium was to raise awareness about disordered gambling, as well as build treatment capacity in Western Massachusetts. The prevention, intervention and treatment of problem gambling was discussed, as were services and resources to support recovery.

IS WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS PREPARED TO DEAL WITH EXPANDED GAMBLING?
Symposium Raises Awareness & Builds Treatment Capacity

Topics included: The State of the State: Gambling Expansion and Problem Gambling; Pathological Gambling: Clinical Issues and Treatment Challenges; Co-Occurring Disorders: Mental Health and Gambling Disorders; and Recovery Support Services and Resources.

Media covering the Symposium included: WGBY-TV, Springfield; News12, Springfield; New England Public Radio; Springfield Republican; and Boston Globe.

As a result of the Symposium, three health centers in Western Massachusetts made the commitment to becoming trained to offer problem gambling services at their locations.
The Council directed outreach efforts to veterans, a population at-risk for developing problems with gambling during “National Problem Gambling Awareness Week” (NPGAW) March 4-10, 2012. The purpose of the annual grassroots campaign is to inform the public about the disorder, as well as resources available for help.

During Problem Gambling Awareness Week the Council reached out to veterans across the state to offer information and answer questions about the disorder at facilities including:

- Suffolk Downs, East Boston;
- Veteran’s Transitional House, New Bedford;
- Veterans Inc, Worcester;
- VA Boston Healthcare System, Jamaica Plain;
- VA New England Healthcare System, Bedford;
- and Vietnam Vets Association, Hyannis.

Council Administrative Manager, Karen Sicher who visited the veteran’s Transitional House in New Bedford stated, “The visit went well. Many of the residents shared their experiences with drugs and alcohol and commented that gambling addiction was very similar.”

Other Veteran’s-related events that the Council attended to disseminate information and to raise awareness of problem gambling among vets included: The State of Veteran’s Services Forum in Boston, Hoops for Troops in Newton, Veteran’s Day Hardball Live in Roxbury and the Mass Dept. of Veterans Services event in Weymouth, MA.

According to a study presented at the American Psychiatric Association’s 59th Institute on Psychiatric Services, “Pathological gambling is more prevalent among military veterans than in the US general population and may be associated with combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).”

A New York Times article stated, “The armed forces are heavily populated by people who may be especially vulnerable to gambling addiction: athletic, risk-taking young people who are experiencing severe stress and anxiety.” In fact, about 2.2 percent of military personnel have indicators of probable pathological gambling, compared with about .77 to 1.6 percent in the general population.”
New Outreach to the RECOVERY COMMUNITY

At the core of the Council’s mission is reducing the social, financial and emotional costs of problem gambling. Recovery support services are designed to help people in early recovery by identify and addressing obstacles that make maintaining recovery more difficult.

In FY12, the Council reached out to the recovery community in a variety of ways including:

- Developed a recovery space at its office where people in recovery from gambling can find a supportive environment with access to staff, a library, a computer and internet access.
- Formed a Recovery Advisory Board (RAB). The board is made up of people in recovery for problem gambling and family members and share ideas for Council recovery programs and plans.
- Hosted a “Recovery Open House” – 25 people in attendance
- Attended 12-step meetings, including the 2012 International Gamblers Anonymous Conference, which was held in Boston.

In FY13, the Council plans to reach out to more people in problem gambling recovery and their family members with specialized programming and services.

CONTRIBUTORS

The Council is grateful to the following individuals and organizations who have contributed to the Council’s mission through their generous donations in FY12:

- Carol Bashkoian
- Les Bernal
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- Wendy Burge
- Margot Cahoon
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- Kevin Grant
- Stephen Howard
- James J. Hudson
- Robert Hynes
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- Beverlee Timmons
- Melissa Ventresca
- Comma Williams
- Marlene D. Warner
- Susan Woltersdorf
- James Wuelfing
# Statement of Financial Position

**June 30, 2012**

*unaudited*

## Assets

**Current Assets:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contracts and Grants Receivable</td>
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<td>Prepaid Expenses</td>
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**Total Current Assets:**

$380,347

**Property and Equipment:**

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<td>Furniture and Fixtures</td>
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<td>Software and Website</td>
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**Total Property and Equipment:**

$173,728

Less Accumulated Depreciation

$69,051

**Total Property and Equipment:**

$104,677

**Total Assets:**

$485,023

## Liabilities and Net Assets

**Current Liabilities:**

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<td>Line of Credit - Bank</td>
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**Total Current Liabilities:**

$305,991

**Net Assets:**

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<tr>
<td>Unrestricted (Retained Earnings)</td>
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<td>Net Income Carryover (Retained Earnings)</td>
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<td>Net Income FY12 (Retained Earnings)</td>
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**Total Net Assets:**

$179,032

**Total Liabilities and Net Assets:**

$485,023
SUMMARY OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
June 30, 2012
unaudited

SOURCES OF REVENUE FOR FY12

TOTAL: $1,471,277.56

SOURCES OF EXPENSES BY PROGRAM FY12

TOTAL: $1,380,119.25
Founded in 1983, the Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling is a private, nonprofit health agency dedicated to providing leadership to reduce the social, financial, and emotional costs of problem gambling, and to promote a continuum of prevention and intervention strategies including: information and public awareness, community education and professional training, advocacy and referral services for problem gamblers, their loved ones and the greater community.

The Council is funded in part by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Websites:</th>
<th>Council Helplines:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masscompulsivegambling.org</td>
<td>English Helpline: 800-426-1234</td>
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<tr>
<td>latinproblemgambling.org</td>
<td>Spanish Helpline: 857-383-3558</td>
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<td>asianproblemgambling.org</td>
<td>Chinese Helpline: 857-383-3557</td>
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<td>financialfirststeps.org</td>
<td>Vietnamese Helpline: 857-383-3567</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teensknowyourlimits.org</td>
<td>Khmer Helpline: 857-383-3577</td>
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