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Latest National Survey of Problem Gambling Services Reveals Dramatic Inequalities Among States

Washington, DC (January 16, 2018) - The 2016 National Survey of Problem Gambling Services analysis found that despite a 20% increase from 2013 in public funding allocated for problem gambling services, ten states still do not have any public funding for problem gambling services. These extremely uneven levels of support result in huge disparities in prevention and treatment services for individuals with gambling problems across the country.

Released by the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) and the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA), the survey reveals that since 2013, twenty-five states increased their funding levels, seven had no change and nine reported cuts. This includes Arkansas, which eliminated all public funding for problem gambling services.

Terri Sue Canale-Dalman, APGSA President, said “While we know that gambling causes devastation for some people and families, services to minimize and stop that damage remain scarce in many states. Forty-eight of fifty states have organized gambling, so forty-eight states need to build awareness and address the human impact of gambling’s potential consequences.”

The National Survey of Problem Gambling Services is the only comprehensive survey about public funding and distribution of problem gambling services in the United States. The survey included questions about budget, staffing, and program growth or cuts during 2016. Fifty state health agencies and all thirty-three NCPG state affiliates were asked to participate. The report includes overall national spending on problem gambling programs in 2016 as well as trends over the past decade and state-by-state breakdowns. The report includes individual profiles of Problem Gambling Services in all fifty states.

Among the highlights of the 2016 survey are:

- The total amount of public funding allocated for problem gambling services increased 22% from \$60 million in 2013 to \$73 million in 2016,
- Substance use disorders are about four times more common than gambling disorders, while public funding for substance use disorder treatment is about 334 times greater than public funding for all gambling disorder or problem gambling services.
- In 2016, only about one quarter of one percent of people who needed problem gambling treatment received publicly funded care from a gambling treatment specialist.
- The Federal Government does not provide dedicated funding for problem gambling services.

"While program funding for some states has increased in 2016, overall, the lack of funding in many states creates a significant lack of services for those seeking recovery," said NCPG Executive Director Keith Whyte. "The lack of any federal funding dedicated to problem gambling services continues to place an undue burden on an individual state's capacity to serve and respond. If keeping people healthy and safe is a priority, then we should expand funding for problem gambling education and treatment, not keep cutting it."

Copies of the 2016 National Survey of Problem Gambling Services in its entirety are available at: <https://www.ncpgambling.org/programs-resources/programs/2016-survey-problem-gambling-services/>.

About the National Council on Problem Gambling

NCPG is the national advocate for problem gamblers and their families. NCPG is neutral on legalized gambling and works with all stakeholders to promote responsible gaming. For more information on the 32nd National Conference on Problem Gambling, visit www.ncpgambling.org/conference.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call or text the National Problem Gambling Helpline Network at 800.522.4700 or visit www.ncpg.org/chat for confidential help.

About the Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators

The Association of Problem Gambling Service Administrators (APGSA) is a national membership organization of state administrators of public funds for problem gambling services. The organization was formed in 2000 to support development of services to reduce the impact of problem gambling in the U.S. To learn more about APGSA and problem gambling services across the nation, visit www.apgsa.org.

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