



# NCPG

National Council on Problem Gambling

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## **National Council on Problem Gambling Statement on October 1 Las Vegas Shooting**

*Media Reports Gunman Recently Had Significant Gambling Involvement; NCPG Executive  
Director in Las Vegas This Week*

In light of current media reports this morning and public speculation about the gambling habits of Stephen Paddock, the National Council on Problem Gambling stresses that while gambling addiction is a serious disorder, and that individuals with gambling problems report a wide range of negative consequences up to and including high rates of suicidal behavior, we do not know what mental health problems the gunman may have faced and urge caution in these speculations. Large gambling transactions and high stakes gambling do not necessarily mean Paddock had a gambling problem, or that a gambling problem led directly or indirectly to his homicidal and suicidal behavior.

Approximately 2% of Americans meet criteria for problem gambling in a given year, or almost 6 million adults. However, the availability, affordability and accessibility of specialized, specific treatment services varies widely across the states, including a dozen states with no public funding. In 2016, fewer than 13,000 Americans sought publicly funded treatment for gambling problems, and on average states spent less than 10 cents per capita to prevent and treat gambling addiction.

NCPG President Marlene Warner stated: "It is times like these that remind us just how important the work is that we do -- people with mental illness and life struggles are at the center of what we do and represent. This is a time to be vigilant in our compassionate care and diligent in our efforts to implement and promote sound public health policy."

NCPG urges people who may have a gambling problem to make an anonymous, toll free call, text or chat to the National Problem Gambling Helpline Network 800.522.4700 or [www.ncpgambling.org/chat](http://www.ncpgambling.org/chat). There is hope and help available, 24/7 across the nation.

NCPG Executive Director Keith Whyte is in Las Vegas for the 18<sup>th</sup> Conference on Gambling and Addiction, held annually in conjunction with the Global Gaming Expo and is available to speak to the media.

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 and public awareness about problem gambling and gambling addiction.

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