

MARCH IS PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

March 6, 2024 – This March, District Health Department #10 (DHD#10) is recognizing Problem Gambling Awareness Month as an opportunity to increase public understanding of the signs of problem gambling and the availability of prevention, treatment, and recovery services. Michigan generated \$1.92 billion in revenue from online gambling in 2023, which is more than any other state in the nation, according to the American Gaming Association. Problem gambling impacts an estimated 75,000 Michiganders each year.

Problem gambling is often referred to as a “hidden illness” or “silent addiction” due to the lack of obvious physical signs or symptoms like there are with other addictions. With more opportunities to gamble than ever before, such as phone and internet games, apps, video poker, fantasy sports, and more, it is easy for gambling to go undetected.

The top 4 signs that someone may have a gambling issue include:

- Lying to hide their gambling activities
- Trying to stop gambling without success
- Gambling to escape problems or negative emotions
- Relying on others to pay their bills or gambling debts

Those at greatest risk for experiencing gambling problems or addiction include:

- People who bet on sports
- People with other addictions
- Having a family history of problem gambling
- Teens and young people (especially men) between the ages of 25 to 34 years old

Problem gamblers often experience higher rates of depression and increased rates of suicidal behavior. Treatment and recovery resources are available and do work.

If you or someone you know has a gambling problem, call the Michigan Problem Gambling Hotline at 1-800-270-7117 or the National Problem Gambling Helpline Network at 1-800-522-470 for confidential help. Both Hotlines are available 24/7, at no cost.

For more information and resources on problem gambling, please visit <https://www.dhd10.org/men-women/problem-gambling/>.

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