



Contact: Susan Craig | Aaron Fallon
communications@oasas.ny.gov; 518-457-8299

GOVERNOR ANDREW M. CUOMO
COMMISSIONER ARLENE GONZÁLEZ-SÁNCHEZ

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***NYS OASAS LAUNCHES NEW INITIATIVE TO TRAIN COUNSELING PROFESSIONALS
TO RECOGNIZE AND TREAT PROBLEM GAMBLING***

***New Statewide training program prepares workforce to meet the need for
problem gambling treatment services***

The New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services today announced a new, multi-year program to train counseling professionals to better enable them to deliver problem gambling treatment and support services. Many individuals seek private practitioners for help to address problem gambling and this new training program ensures that private practitioners are knowledgeable about problem gambling and will increase access to treatment and support services. The Problem Gambling Training Partnership, funded by NYS OASAS, will offer training on assessment and treatment for a gambling disorder to social workers, mental health counselors, marriage and family therapists and psychoanalysts throughout New York State.

“With these new trainings, counseling professionals across the state will be better equipped to recognize problem gambling signs and to treat and refer New Yorkers to the help they need,” said **NYS OASAS Commissioner Arlene González-Sánchez**. “New Yorkers who have a gambling problem will now be able to tap into a larger network of qualified health professionals who can help them, and get them back on track toward a life in recovery. OASAS is pleased to join with the New York Council on Problem Gambling and our new partners on these new statewide efforts.”

The new program is part of a statewide collaboration between NYS OASAS and the New York Council on Problem Gambling (NYCPG). The NYCPG will work with the New York State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW-NYS), the New York Mental Health Counselors Association (NYMHCA), the New York Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (NYMFT), and the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis (NAAP) to implement this new initiative. These five professional organizations partnering in this effort represent nearly 20,000 counseling professionals across the state.

The program will provide evidence-based training on best practices related to problem gambling prevention, treatment and support services through in-person training institutes, webinars and print materials, and clinical support. Training programs will begin in May and be offered regionally throughout the state. This new funding, totaling more than \$350,000 in 2016 also will enable the associations to develop a public awareness campaign to inform the public about problem gambling and the availability of counseling services.

“This initiative to train more professionals on how to recognize and treat problem gambling is another example of effective policy in this era of expanded gaming,” said **New York Gaming Commission Executive Director Robert Williams**. “We must make sure that quality help is available for those that need it. OASAS and the New York Council on Problem Gambling have been invaluable partners in the Responsible Play Partnership and we commend them for collaborating to expand crucial services.”

“We are excited to be a part of this project,” said **James J. Maney, Executive Director of New York Council on Problem Gambling**. “The work that will be done through this collaboration is going to increase access to care for New Yorkers struggling with problem gambling.”





“As an organization representing thousands of social workers across the New York State, we are pleased to adopt these education and training measures that will help to proactively address problem gambling in New York State,” said **NASW-NYS Executive Director, Ron Bunce**.

“This program will provide New Yorkers who may be struggling with problem gambling issues with information about qualified and licensed mental health and addiction counselors in their community,” said **Judith L. Ritterman, Executive Director of the New York Mental Health Counselors Association**. “Investing in the education of licensed mental health and addiction treatment professionals shows New York's commitment to treatment for those with problem gambling issues and to responsible gaming.”

“We are excited to be part of bringing quality education to mental health and addiction professionals so that they will be able to serve the treatment needs for those who are affected by problem gambling in New York State,” said **Jennifer Harper, President of the National Association for the Advancement of Psychoanalysis**.

“The impact of problem gambling for some of New York’s families can be serious,” said **Carol Podgorski, President of the New York Association for Marriage and Family Therapy**. “That is why our profession is proud to be a leader in shedding a light on the issue and taking important steps to prepare for treatment needs that may arise.”

To sign up for a training or to learn more about the trainings offered throughout the state, visit [The New York State Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers](#) or www.oasas.ny.gov/gambling.

New Yorkers struggling with problem gambling, or whose loved ones are struggling, can find help and hope by calling the State’s HOPEline at 1-877-8-HOPENY (1-877-846-7369) or by texting HOPENY (Short Code 467369). New Yorkers can also find an OASAS-certified problem gambling or substance use disorder treatment provider by using the NYS [OASAS Bed Availability Dashboard](#) or visiting the [NYS OASAS Find Help web page](#). For additional tools to use in talking to a young person about preventing problem gambling, underage drinking or drug use, visit the State’s [Talk2Prevent](#) website.

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