



OREGON
HEALTH
AUTHORITY

2023 / 24

OREGON PROBLEM GAMBLING Services System Report



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Annual Report 2024



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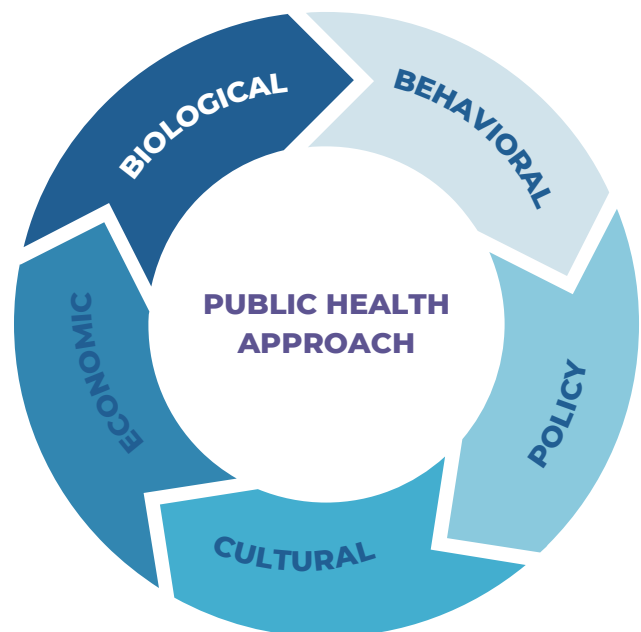
Overview

Oregon's leadership in problem gambling services embodies collaboration and spirit that places the individual first while developing a service structure to meet individual, family, and community needs as they arise. Furthermore, it ensures that the professionals providing these services are adequately trained and supported through policies, programming, and resources.

This report highlights the efforts of the Oregon Health Authority's (OHA) Problem Gambling Services (PGS). OHA PGS aims to ensure that Oregonians have an array of support for awareness, prevention, treatment, and recovery services related to problem gambling and gambling disorder, and to professionals providing these services in our communities. These efforts are reflected in a PGS System Report, published annually in the fall. The purpose of this document is to discuss programs and projects implemented the previous year by the state entity, and to hold it accountable to the system's providers, policymakers, funders, and strategic planning goals. This report will reference accompanying reports and tools that additionally highlight the OHA PGS system. A reader may want to refer back to the [2020-23 PGS System Report](#) for context and comparison, as the current document is briefer and includes fewer program-specific details

WHAT WE DO

Oregon's Problem Gambling Services are guided by a public health paradigm that considers biological, behavioral, economic, cultural, and policy determinants influencing gambling and health. It incorporates prevention, harm reduction, and multiple levels of treatment and recovery by emphasizing quality-of-life issues for those directly impacted by gambling harms, their families, and communities. By appreciating the multidimensionality of gambling, OHA PGS incorporates strategies that minimize negative impacts while recognizing the reality of gambling's availability, culture of social acceptance, and economic impact.



AUTHORITY/STATUE/TREATMENT FUND

There is no federal funding designated to problem gambling services in the United States, nor oversight from a national entity. Consequently, states receive vastly different funding amounts from various entities, ranging from \$250,000 to \$20 million annually. Coming from one percent of the Oregon State Lottery (OSL) revenues, Oregon receives one of the highest funding allocations per capita. This one percent, which equated to approximately \$8 million in fiscal year 2023-24, funds OHA PGS' services and efforts.

Oregon's Problem Gambling Services System

Oregon is nationally recognized as a leader in problem gambling services, providing prevention, outreach, treatment, and recovery services. OHA, in collaboration with partners, administers a problem gambling treatment and prevention system that covers a continuum of care and includes:

- Prevention and outreach efforts that are stand-alone and embedded into other prevention systems (e.g., suicide, alcohol, tobacco, drugs) to increase awareness that problem gambling is a serious public health concern
- 24/7 helpline answered by a gambling-informed specialist
- GEAR, a minimal intervention program involving phone counseling with a workbook
- Outpatient care, including individual, group, and family therapy with tele-counseling and culturally-specific programs
- Crisis respite care
- Residential treatment
- Problem gambling recovery peer mentor programs
- Gambling education and treatment for adults in custody

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

The following are the main areas heavily invested in by the OHA PGS system:

**1) SYSTEM CHANGE
AND EXPANSION**

**2) TOOLS AND
RESOURCES**

**3) DATA AND
RESEARCH**

**4) WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT**

I. System Change and Expansion

Each year, there are many small system changes that OHA PGS makes. Occasionally, through detailed planning and opportunities, there are larger changes to the system, discussed below.



2024-29 PGS STRATEGIC PLAN AND OPERATIONAL PLANS

In January 2024, OHA PGS published a 5-year strategic plan highlighting six focus areas:

1) CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

4) INTEGRATION

2) HEALTH PROMOTION AND PREVENTION

5.) WORKFORCE

3) TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

6.) EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

In the first half of 2024, OHA PGS staff began implementing the strategic plan by developing an operations plan for each area of focus. The operation plan and progress will be published and presented during a PGS All Provider webinar at the end of 2024.



INCLUSIVITY, LANGUAGE, & STIGMA REDUCTION PROJECT

In early 2023, OHA PGS and the Oregon State Lottery (OSL) began discussing destigmatizing language within the OHA PGS system, specifically the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR) web page. A project was formalized to look at language, including who is and is not included in current messaging through the OPGR webpage. It was realized that the system focused primarily on those with the highest service needs and those seeking traditional counseling services. Messaging focused less attention on those whose gambling may be less problematic and those seeking self-help harm reduction. To expand inclusivity, OHA PGS and OSL initiated the Inclusivity, Language, and Stigma Reduction Project.

OSL researched messaging, services, and resources that might appeal to individuals gambling at various levels. Based on their findings, OSL updated the OPGR webpage to be better tailored for those looking to moderate their gambling and heavily marketed new resources. At the time of this report, OSL completed their research and a report. OSL is now duplicating the research with loved ones of individuals with problem gambling.

OHA PGS reviewed the research along the way and is presently determining how to redesign aspects of the system to expand help services to fit all levels of gambling. Many of these initial efforts will be implemented and discussed in greater detail in the next annual system report.



CLEVELAND HOUSE: PG RECOVERY HOUSING

OHA PGS and Holistic Healing Behavioral Healthcare collaborated to design and purchase four beds for BIPOC and LGBTQIA2S+ individuals with housing insecurity utilizing problem gambling services. The beds are located in the Cleveland House, a culturally specific addiction recovery home in Multnomah County. During this year, OHA PGS provided financial assistance to Holistic Healing Behavioral Healthcare for the final renovations of the house. The beds became available in July 2024.



NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PROBLEM GAMBLING

OHA PGS's Prevention Specialist was invited to participate in a new Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America's (CADCA) Advisory Committee on Problem Gambling, supporting CADCA's efforts to increase learning opportunities related to the problem gambling field. This opportunity will help inform CADCA's efforts to integrate problem gambling into its strategic plan and improve its prevention efforts. Since 1992, CADCA has shown the impact of bringing multiple sectors of a community together to make social change happen. As they make efforts to expand problem gambling into their work, OHA PGS is honored to collaborate with colleagues across the U.S. to support the work in Oregon, nationally, and globally. The advisory committee kicked off in early July 2024.



GAMBLING SERVICES EXPANDED WITHIN OREGON DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS (ODOC)



Treatment and educational services have been present within three ODOC facilities, including Coffee Creek Correctional Facility, Columbia River Correction Institute, and Oregon State Correctional Institute. In the spring of 2024, the ODOC Behavioral Health Program expressed intentions to expand problem gambling services to Oregon State Penitentiary and Snake River Correctional Institute. OHA PGS has initiated onboarding new contractors for these regions who, at the time of this publication, are awaiting their start dates. Gambling treatment services within these facilities are otherwise integrated into substance use or mental health services, which ODOC is also expanding at these two locations.



MEDICAID-ELIGIBLE OUTPATIENT GAMBLING DISORDER TREATMENT

In January 2023, gambling disorder treatment services became a Medicaid-eligible service. The launch within each of Oregon Medicaid's Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) was initially slow, picking up after six months of implementation. In the spring of 2024, OHA PGS requested a data pull of the claims, clients, and facilities providing these services. At the time of publishing this report, the data is currently under review and should be included in the FY2023-24 Treatment System Report, to be released at the end of 2024. OHA PGS continues to provide technical assistance to the organizations still needing setup support.

Thus far, most Medicaid-eligible services came from our existing non-Medicaid contracted providers. However, there was one new entity, Yellowhawk Tribal Health Center (YTHC), that completed the Certificate of Approval process for their outpatient treatment services through the OHA Behavioral Health Division. YTHC provides healthcare for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and other American Indians and Alaska Natives in Oregon's Umatilla and Union counties.



PROBLEM GAMBLING AS PART OF INTEGRATED CO-OCCURRING DISORDER (ICD) PROGRAM

In 2023, OHA launched the ICD Medicaid program as part of a legislative mandate aiming to improve the provision of integrated care. With the implementation of this new program, OHA PGS ensured that problem gambling treatment was included; generally, co-occurring disorders are considered to include mental health and substance use disorders, neglecting gambling disorders. Problem Gambling (PG) Specialist positions were created to function within the ICD programs, the role requiring 15 hours of gambling-specific education without needing a gambling addiction counselor certification. PG Specialists treat individuals with a gambling disorder diagnosis that is less severe than their co-occurring behavioral health diagnoses.

Within the first 18 months of the new program (January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024), there were 53 registered ICD programs and approximately 85 designated PG Specialists and recovery mentors. The program continues to grow; at the time of this report, a new training pathway is under design to assist ICD PG specialists in obtaining gambling counselor certification.

II. Tools and Resource Initiatives



ONBOARDING PROCESS

The OHA PGS prevention system is revising its onboarding process for new prevention coordinators. To accomplish this, a workgroup was formed, consisting of volunteers from Deschutes, Jackson, Josephine, Lane, Marion, and Multnomah Counties' Problem Gambling Prevention Programs, to determine onboarding needs and resources. Next, the treatment system will develop standardized onboarding.

GamFin FINANCIAL COUNSELING FOR PROVIDERS & CLIENTS

GamFin is a leading financial counseling provider for individuals and families with gambling-related financial problems. In 2024, OHA PGS partnered and contracted with GamFin to provide no-cost financial counseling to clients with the OHA PGS system. With this access, clients can receive expertise from a financial counselor and clinicians can consult with financial counselors for guidance on handling topics like budgeting, debt management, and restitution planning and best practices for helping clients understand their relationship with money. In the first months of this partnership, seven clients utilized services totaling 24.5 hours.

Toward the end of the fiscal year, OHA PGS began communicating with GamFin to offer financial counseling services to Affected Others, who may not be connected with the treatment system. A process was developed with the problem gambling helpline and services began July 1, 2024. These outcomes will be reported in the FY 2024-25 PGS System Report.



IMPACTS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING ON PUBLIC HEALTH

In 2021, with the help of a consultant, OHA PGS developed a public health booklet to provide user-friendly information for public and professional communities to identify important connections regarding the relationship between problem gambling and other public health concerns. The stand-alone briefs developed for this booklet demonstrate the important impact of problem gambling on public health.

This year, work began on three new topics: 1) Cannabis and Gambling, 2) Gambling and the LGBTQIA2S+ population, and 3) Gambling and College Students. The [Impacts of Problem Gambling on Public Health](#) booklet can be found on the OHA PGS webpage.

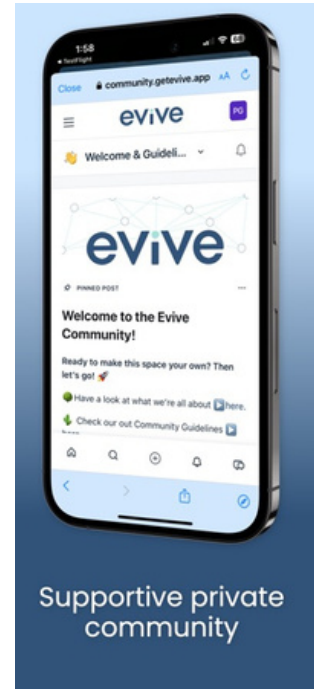




EVIVE: DIGITAL HEALTH APP FOR PROBLEM GAMBLING

Evive, a gambling behavioral support app, delivers resources to help people with their relationship with gambling whether it be preventing gambling harm, changing gambling behaviors, or stopping gambling altogether. Evive's platform offers a suite of features developed by professionals in psychology, addiction counseling, and mobile technology. The platform's features include behavioral change tools, a customized toolkit, educational content, and a private community for support.

OHA PGS contracted with Evive in the spring of 2024 to provide free access for clients within the treatment system. Additionally, implementation within the system was piloted with select providers to determine how best to engage with this tool via the client and how it might assist with services. The contract runs until the end of 2024. At the time of this report, 20 individuals have engaged with Evive. When it first launched, Evive focused primarily on individuals wanting to stop gambling. The app now includes features and resources for people wanting to reduce or prevent gambling harm. Additionally, in July 2024, OSL contracted with Evive to provide free app access to all Oregon residents, via the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource web page. This is an ongoing initiative.



PGS MULTIETHNIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC)

The MAC has an annual strategic planning session to determine system needs and projects to address for the upcoming year. The committee met in the fall of 2023 and developed the following areas of focus: 1) Recruitment, 2) Training, and 3) Communication. Subcommittees were developed to operationalize plans for the focus areas. MAC efforts over FY 2023-24 have primarily focused on webpage development, content, and structural components of the committee. At the time of this report, the MAC is developing a training plan for 2025.



MULTICULTURAL AND MARGINALIZED POPULATION EMPOWERMENT CONSULTANT PROGRAM (MMPECP)

OHA PGS has been dedicated to equitable access to high-quality care, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace, and cultivating and sustaining relationships with community partners to broaden the reach; these efforts depend on understanding the communities we work with. The MMPECP provides expert consultation to the prevention, treatment, and recovery system. Launched in February 2023, with a current team of nine consultants, the program is widely underutilized. OHA PGS is evaluating marketing efforts of MMPECP consultation opportunities, to encourage engagement. Program details, processes of utilizing services, and a profile of the consultants can be accessed in the [MMPECP Guide](#).

III. Data and Research Initiatives



STUDENT HEALTH SURVEY

The Student Health Survey is a state-wide, comprehensive, school-based, anonymous, and voluntary health survey of 6th, 8th, and 11th graders, conducted every even-numbered year. OHA PGS has ensured that gambling-related questions are included in these and similar surveys since 2010. While the survey is moving to be conducted yearly, problem gambling questions will be included every other year. For the upcoming year, questions will be revised and the possibility of adding internet gaming questions to the survey will be proposed. Results from the 2024 survey will be available in 2025.



BEHAVIORAL RISK FACTOR SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM

Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) is the nation's premier system of health-related telephone surveys. It collects data from U.S. adult residents regarding health-related risk behaviors, chronic health conditions, and the use of preventive services. In 2022, OHA PGS submitted gambling-specific questions to be added to the 2023 survey, and again for 2024. Results of the 2023 survey will be available in the fall of 2024. A report on the results will be developed and published with an anticipated date of January 2025.



PG NET

PG Net collects client demographic and treatment information about clients receiving services from the non-Medicaid funded gambling treatment system. The information collected allows OHA PGS to understand who is served, the types and frequency of services, the cost of service, and more. The data collected each fiscal year is analyzed and published at the end of the calendar year. Treatment evaluation reports can be found at: www.oregon.gov/oha/HSD/Problem-Gambling/Pages/Data.aspx.

In FY 2023-24, OHA PGS revamped the PG Net System, now termed PG Net 2.0, by consolidating fields, expanding the data collected, and creating different pathways of data collection based on the type of individual (e.g., gambling client, gambling concerned other, gaming client, and peer service client) and service provided. Updates went live in June 2024.



PG NET REPORTS AND DASHBOARDS

In 2022 the PG Net system officially began to distribute reports via email on a quarterly basis to our contracted providers. Each report, 9 total, were sent separately by the system to the designated contacts. This was a bit overwhelming for those receiving the emails. In spring of 2024 we were informed that the reports would be included in PG Net as dashboards and users of PG Net could access their reports at any time. Additionally, OHA PGS expanded reports in allowing providers to be able to input dates for data runs. Dashboards in PG Net started to be available in May of 2024 and officially available in July 2024.



FOLLOW UP EVALUATION PROJECT

To assess the process and outcomes of gambling treatment services in Oregon, OHA PGS launched the Follow-Up Evaluation Project on July 1, 2023. Clients participating in services are assessed at 30-day, 90-day, 6-month, and 1-year time points from their treatment start date. Following treatment discharge, participants are re-engaged and assessed again six months and one year later. Collected data includes problem gambling symptoms, co-occurring psychopathology, social determinants of health, general wellness, and satisfaction with treatment services. At the time of this report, the project has been underway for over one year; data is being analyzed and will be included in the FY 2023-24 PG Treatment System Evaluation Report, published in December 2024 on the [OHA PGS website](#).



GAMBLING PREVALENCE AND BEHAVIOR STUDY & POPULATION SPECIFIC FOCUS GROUPS

In early 2024, the Oregon Council on Problem Gambling (OCPG) Research Committee, on which OHA PGS is represented, began discussing the need for a prevalence study. Additionally, discussions were had around how to represent populations that are typically undersampled in large studies. After reviewing responses to the call for proposals, a panel-based method was selected. The study will be conducted in the fall of 2024 with results available in early 2025. Because this method will not allow for oversampling of underrepresented populations, focus groups representing certain populations will be held to collect qualitative information about gambling. Currently, a proposal for this effort is in process and on track to be implemented in early 2025. The first focus groups will include adolescents and parents/caregivers. Future populations of focus include LGBTQIA2S+, Latine/Spanish-speaking, Black/African American, and Native American/Alaskan Indian communities.



PGSI AND WRNA VALIDATION RESEARCH PROJECT

A huge milestone within the criminal legal system occurred over the past few years; the Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI) was added to the Women's Risk Needs Assessment (WRNA). The WRNA is the only validated, peer-reviewed risk/needs assessment instrument designed from the ground up by and for justice-involved women. The PGSI is a validated tool to measure at-risk behavior in people experiencing problems with gambling, commonly used in problem gambling behavior research studies, including OHA PGS' prevalence research among Oregon Department of Corrections (ODOC) adults in custody. However, when the PGSI was added to the WRNA the response method was changed from a validated Likert rating scale to a yes/no response; the tool has not been validated with this type of response set.

OHA PGS worked with ODOC to develop methods to research the psychometrics of this modified response method. The Oregon Council on Problem Gambling's Research Center has approved funding for this study, which is now anticipated to begin in early 2025. Results will be available in mid-2025.



IV. Workforce Development Initiatives

Unlike other behavioral health programs, there is no national organization that funds, oversees, or advocates for problem gambling services. As a result, there are comparably few training opportunities in the problem gambling field to further education in the field of problem gambling. OHA PGS takes the responsibility of facilitating the local workforce development and serves as a resource to the system, offering a plethora of trainings annually.



ADVANCED CAREER ONSITE RESOURCE NETWORK (ACORN) TRAINING WEB SITE:

OHA PGS continues to offer new training and professional development opportunities for problem gambling providers through ACORN. The site allows OHA PGS to house online trainings and announcements with a user-friendly registration process and the ability to track the utilization of offerings and demographics of registrants. Within the ACORN site, OHA PGS promotes online training and continuing education (CE/CEU) courses for Oregon's gambling certification and contractual requirements. Opportunities are available from recorded monthly webinars and numerous bundles of training courses for problem gambling system providers, behavioral health providers, public health professionals, supervisors, family service providers, and ICD program professionals. Live, asynchronous, and self-paced courses are offered.



PROBLEM GAMBLING COUNSELOR PRECERTIFICATION

The Problem Gambling Counselor Precertification is a synchronous (live) online training that provides the required 30 educational hours to become certified as a Gambling Addictions Counselor (CGAC) in Oregon. Course content is informed by the [Problem Gambling Treatment Provider Core Competencies](#).

The course includes virtual classes and self-paced lessons between meetings. The course is offered twice annually. In FY 2023-24, 31 participants attended and completed the precertification course.





ADVANCED PROBLEM GAMBLING COUNSELOR TRAINING

Offered in a hybrid format, this course bundle includes both real-time, online education, self-paced, and on-demand courses. Together, these education components yield 30 hours of training needed to become a Certified Gambling Addictions Counselor II (CGAC II). This course is offered once a year. In FY 2023-24, there were 5 participants who completed this course.



WORKING WITH FAMILIES IN PROBLEM GAMBLING TREATMENT TRAINING

OHA PGS partnered with marriage and family therapy professionals to develop a manual and 30-hour online self-paced training that would support our problem gambling treatment providers in working with families and concerned others of individuals with gambling concerns. The manual offers meaningful information to provide direction for how to work with families in problem gambling treatment. The training complements the manual by providing guidance on counseling families struggling with problem gambling. In FY2023-24, 20 individuals participated in this training, 12 of whom completed the 30-hour training.





PROBLEM GAMBLING-RELATED TREATMENT: SELF-PACED ONLINE TRAININGS

Through the [ACORN](#) website, there is a plethora of problem gambling treatment-related training opportunities. The training site is frequented by behavioral health professionals and problem gambling treatment specialists alike; 17% of enrollees are from other states and 6% are from other countries.

TABLE 1. ACORN TRAININGS FY2023-34

COURSE TITLE	ENROLLED	COMPLETED
Sociocultural Attunement	733	659
Problem Gambling Overview	302	262
Problem Gambling and Money	244	219
Risk Assessment and Suicide Prevention	246	233
Cognitive Behavioral Interventions in Problem Gambling Treatment	229	207
Problem Gambling Assessment and Treatment Planning	202	193
Gambling and Co-occurring Disorder	197	176
Diversity, Social Equity, and Problem Gambling	195	162
Family Treatment for Problem Gambling	165	160
Gambling and the Brain	150	143
Values, Mindfulness, and Emotion in Problem Gambling Treatment	148	130
Initial Engagement in Problem Gambling Treatment	141	132
Problem Gambling Treatment Psychoeducation	95	92
Socioculturally Attuned Supervision of Problem Gambling Treatment	86	84
Supervising Problem Gambling Treatment Part One	70	61
Supervising Problem Gambling Treatment Part Two	54	51
Core Competencies in Problem Gambling Consultation & Supervision	71	65
Problem Gambling Treatment Consultation	69	65
Administrative Supervision in Problem Gambling Treatment	65	63



OHA PGS WEBINARS AND ONLINE COURSES

Each year, OHA PGS offers live and recorded webinars on various topics and trends in problem gambling. When recordings are available, they are placed on the ACORN web page for future viewing by providers. This year, a new quarterly webinar was hosted, called the Oregon Research & Evaluation Outcomes webinar (OREO-PG). This webinar series was developed based on feedback from providers to share and discuss data from Oregon's PG Net system, follow-up surveys, research conducted in Oregon, and emerging trends and potential impacts. It provides the opportunity for providers to learn about cutting-edge research in the field of problem gambling led by experienced evaluation professionals explaining data in an engaging and exciting way. Table 2 presents webinars from FY2023-24.

TABLE 2. OHA PGS WEBINARS FY2023-34

WEBINAR TITLE	IN PERSON	ONLINE
Money, Magic and Misery	20	20
Loneliness and Isolation in Older Adults	20	25
A Losing Hand: MAT and PG	16	13
The Hidden War: Problem Gambling Behavior Among Veterans	14	8
SMVF And Problem Gambling in Oregon: Military Cultural Awareness and How it Affects What We Do	16	10
Oregon Tribes: History, Gambling and Working in Partnership	25	9
GamFin Orientation	19	4
PSU Student and Athlete Problem Gambling Survey Results and Implications	17	4
OREO: Oregon Treatment Data	26	4
Context and Nuances of Treating Sporting Betting	29	11
OREO: Artificial Intelligence: Threats and Opportunities	10	2

Additionally, OHA PGS has developed self-paced, online essential trainings for prevention and treatment providers that are referenced in contractual language. These essential trainings can be found on the ACORN website and listed below are the courses and numbers enrolled and completed for the fiscal year.

TABLE 3. OHA PGS CONTRACTUALLY-REQUIRED ONLINE COURSES FY2023-34

PREVENTION COURSE TITLE	ENROLLED	COMPLETED
Introduction to Prevention Ethics	72	70
Problem Gambling Prevention 101: Module 1	49	47
Problem Gambling Prevention 101: Module 2	47	46
Prevention Foundation Training	44	44
Problem Gambling Prevention Planning Framework and Reporting	32	32
Problem Gambling Prevention Supervisor Training	29	29
Responsible Gaming Approach with Oregon Lottery Retailers	27	27
TREATMENT COURSE TITLE	ENROLLED	COMPLETED
Problem Gambling Training for Social Service Professionals: Module One	62	51
Problem Gambling Training for Social Service Professionals: Module Two	31	28



IN PERSON OR HYBRID TRAINING OFFERINGS

To be accessible to busy schedules, most training offered by OHA PGS are online as self-paced courses or webinars; however, each year OHA PGS offers a few in-person or hybrid training opportunities.



PG FALL SUMMIT

Every other year, OHA PGS hosts a PG Summit for providers and partners. A summit was hosted in the fall of 2023 with 77 attendees. Over the two-day event, there was a Tribal Stick Game demonstration, the unveiling of the 5-year PGS strategic plan, discussion of the Inclusivity, Language, and Stigma Reduction project, CADCA Prevention Bootcamp kick-off meeting, presentations on local student research projects, dialogue on PG treatment data and outcomes, and with a keynote and presentation from a national expert on gaming disorder.

CADCA PREVENTION BOOTCAMP

OHA PGS offered a CADCA Problem Gambling Prevention Bootcamp Training Series this year. The training series consisted of a kickoff meeting, three virtual all-day sessions, and three refresher webinars over six months, culminating in a final in-person training day. A total of 22 PG prevention programs supported their staff's attendance, some participating as whole teams. Attendees explored:

- Local conditions that need to be addressed
- Building the capacity of the Problem Gambling Awareness Teams with members from treatment, prevention, recovery, and diverse community members
- Developing a communication plan to share and promote resources in the community
- Community readiness to address problem gambling, identifying new stakeholders

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE- A COLLABORATIVE CONFERENCE WITH THE EVERGREEN COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING (ECPG)

Every two years, OHA PGS and ECPG host the Focus on the Future Conference as a collaborative effort near the Oregon-Washington border. The conference allows providers to attend local training with simultaneous educational tracks for prevention, treatment, and recovery, bringing national experts to the space. This year, OHA PGS was excited to bring Dr. Suzanne Wertheim, a leader in inclusive language specializing in analyzing and addressing bias, in for a full-day workshop.



TRAINING SCHOLARSHIPS

OHA PGS continues to offer training scholarships to support providers who would like to attend an OHA PGS gambling-specific training but are unable to secure financial support from their agency. In FY 2023-24, OHA PGS supported six individuals' participation in the PGS precertification course and one individual's attendance in the Grief Recovery Model training.



CERTIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION SUPPORT SERVICES

CERTIFICATION SCHOLARSHIPS

Contributing to workforce expansion and retention, OHA PGS has continued to offer scholarships covering application fees for certification applications and renewals. 94 individuals have received scholarships to become a CGAC, 42 to become a CGRM, 43 for CGAC certification renewals, and 7 for CGRM renewals.

CERTIFICATION CONSULTANT PROGRAM

Since 2022, OHA PGS has facilitated a Certification Consultant Program to assist individuals pursuing certification and creating more opportunities to accumulate the required certification hours. A [program guide](#) is available to detail the requirements and process. Over FY2023-24, there were nine consultants and 14 participants, four of whom completed their hours and obtained the gambling counseling certification.

CERTIFICATION EXTERNSHIP AND OBSERVATION PROGRAM (CEOP)

In 2023, OHA PGS and a collaborative partner launched a new program to support providers in more rural or frontier areas to obtain clinical experience hours required for gambling counseling certification. The program started in the fall of 2023 and has since received four applications between the observation and externship program options, one of whom has since completed the externship program. A [program guide](#) was developed and presented in July 2024 at the National Conference on Gambling Addiction and Responsible Gambling.



PROBLEM GAMBLING PEER RECOVERY TRAINING AND EFFORTS

Many new problem gambling peer recovery initiatives were launched in FY2023-24, the majority led by Voices on Problem Gambling Recovery (VPGR). VPGR is a non-profit group whose mission is to speak for those affected by problem gambling through advocacy, education, and promoting recovery. OHA PGS contracted VPGR to design and implement a workforce development and training plan for problem gambling peer support specialists or recovery mentors. VPGR was awarded a grant from the OHA Behavioral Health Division's workforce initiatives to develop a 40-hour problem gambling peer training. Until this, there has not been a 40-hour problem gambling peer training that satisfies the training requirements for the Traditional Health Worker program or recovery mentors. The first class was offered in the spring of 2024 with eight attendees.

Another large step was the development of training guidelines for the numerous pathways people can take toward certification or providing services. OHA PGS and VPGR created a [pathways guide](#) to clearly define the requirements and recommendations for each pathway.

Additionally, a Gambling 101 for Peers training was offered virtually in the fall of 2023 and again in early 2024, with a total of 37 attendees.

Looking Forward

Over the last year, there has been significant national and local attention on the Gambling Addiction Recovery, Investment, and Treatment (GRIT) Act. The GRIT Act proposes setting aside half of the federal sports excise tax revenues for funding gambling addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery programs. The federal government levies an excise tax of 0.25% of all money wagered on sports in the United States, which is deposited into a federal general fund. This tax generates an estimated \$250 million, which could fund increasing problem gambling services nationally.

If additional funds were allocated to Oregon's problem gambling services system, large investments could be made in expanding prevention and awareness efforts, peer services, and dismantling gambling-related health inequities. For the next five years, OHA PGS and the problem gambling services system will continue implementing the strategic plan through activities designated within the operation plans. We look forward to sharing the outcomes and successes of FY2024-25 with our leadership, providers, and partners in the subsequent annual OHA PGS System Report.

