



2020 STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSIONS

The Office of Problem Gambling Services (OPGS) brings together a variety of community partners, community members, and advocacy groups to participate in annual Stakeholder Listening Sessions (SLSs). These sessions are held in the casino host communities of Everett and Springfield. The goals of the SLSs are:

- To engage the community to promote health and racial equity
- To gain input on the continued development of programs and services regarding problem gambling



ENGAGEMENT

Stakeholders provide input on a variety of topics: populations disproportionately impacted by problem gambling, service delivery regarding problem gambling, and community-level interventions.



EVALUATION

The perspectives shared by the stakeholders are compiled by the OPGS and later shared in the form of a memo and a report.



ACTION

Stakeholder input is then used to inform the OPGS' programs and services to address problem gambling in Massachusetts.

Office of Problem Gambling Services

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Office of Problem Gambling Services (OPGS) serves to ensure a comprehensive and integrated public health response to problem gambling that uses data to inform initiatives, engage communities, and ensure cultural intelligence and humility.

The OPGS has worked with over 1,200 community members through its community engagement strategies. These include regional planning processes, community health worker needs assessments, and stakeholder listening sessions.

For more information on the Office of Problem Gambling Services, please visit: <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/office-of-problem-gambling-services>

Why Community Engagement?

Community engagement is "the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people" (CDC, 2011). Through community engagement, OPGS advances the Massachusetts Department of Public Health goal of promoting the health and well-being of all residents by ensuring access to high-quality public health and healthcare services, and by focusing on prevention, wellness, and health equity for all people.

2020 Stakeholder Listening Sessions

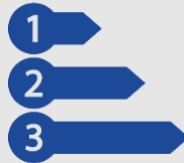


2 Stakeholder Listening Sessions

1 in Revere & 1 in Springfield



71 people representing 33 distinct community, government, and service organizations



3 strategic priorities discussed

- 1) integrate addiction services, mental health services, and primary care;
- 2) increase availability of culturally appropriate services; and
- 3) establish an evaluation infrastructure

What we heard from stakeholders

On integration:

- Provide incentives within procurements to encourage collaboration across sectors and organizations.
- Provide capacity building and encourage staff in the OPGS's Ambassador Project to continue to build trusting relationships to provide services within spaces community members trust.
- Create, disseminate, and use a document outlining how problem gambling services can be integrated with related services, such as those in behavioral health.

On culturally appropriate services:

- Establish forums to connect service providers and community residents to promote ongoing connectedness.
- Directly involve the people for whom the services are intended for in the program development and implementation process, encouraging community ownership and accountability.
- Hire more staff that is truly representative of the community the program seeks to serve.
- Incorporate cultural resources indigenous to the community in the development of information and program materials.

On evaluation infrastructure:

- Continue, disseminate, and replicate current evaluation methodology utilized by the Ambassador Project throughout other OPGS and DPH programming as it encourages the participation of all staff within the program.

“Communication between organizations is a barrier. That’s why I think the ambassadorship is a good initiative because they reach out to the organizations and raise awareness that there could be problem gamblers among their clients and it’s a hidden addiction.”

“One of the challenges that we find is while there are a lot of resources, they’re inaccessible to those marginalized communities, those immigrant communities, those who are limited English proficient.”

“What I think about for evaluation, it has to be flexible. Yes, comes from theory and [we need to] think about what indicators we can have, but it’s also got to be flexible enough to come from communities.[...] I think if it’s going to be culturally intelligent and if we’re going to infuse cultural humility in something like that, it’s got to be two-fold.”