**Opioid and Other Addictive Behavior**

**Connected to Gambling Disorders**

*Ohio For Responsible Gambling addressing comorbidity trends in Ohio.*

**Situation:** People who struggle with gambling disorders often have other behavioral or mental health issues from substance abuse to anxiety. This coupling of behavioral health issues [has been defined as comorbidity.](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18257941)

A 2017 Ohio study found at risk or problem gamblers were the most likely group to think they might have an alcohol or drug problem. More than 15 percent of respondents said they also experienced serious depression in the last year.

Nationally, [The American Journal of Psychiatry](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11579014) found those with dual diagnoses have more negative outcomes resulting from their gambling than those with a single diagnosis. According to [Mike Rosen](https://catsober.org/about-us/cat-today/management-staff/mike-rosen/), Vice President of Clinical Services at Center for Addiction Treatment, many suffering from comorbidity believe their gambling issue is less severe than other addictive behaviors. In some cases, Rosen said patients believed gambling issues weren’t a problem; some even used gambling to replace other addictive behavior.

**Solutions:** Ohio For Responsible Gambling developed two campaigns to educate Ohioans on the changing landscape of gambling in Ohio.

* [The Before You Bet campaign](https://www.beforeyoubet.org/) has a diverse set of tools to provide education and grow awareness of how to keep gambling fun for those who gamble and how to get help for those who need it.
* [Change the Game](https://changethegameohio.org/) aims to stop youth gambling before it starts by connecting parents, educators and children to available resources for prevention and treatment.

**Sources:**

Mike Rosen has provided clinical direction at the Center For Addiction Treatment since 2011 and also serves on the board of the Problem Gambling Network of Ohio and the Ohio Problem Gambling Advisory Board. He will be in central Ohio Feb. 20-21 at [the 17th annual Ohio Problem Gambling Conference](https://pgnohio.org/news-events/event-calendar.html/event/2020/02/21/17th-annual-ohio-problem-gambling-conference/264951) in Lewis Center.

Stacey Frohnapfel-Hasson, chief of Prevention and Problem Gambling, with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services isavailable to talk about the growing impact of comorbidity in Ohio. We can also work to identify a local parent to share his or her story. It is possible that individual will want his or her name withheld. To arrange a conversation, please call (614) 225-9100 or email dan@irvinpr.com or sarah@irvinpr.com.