National Council on Problem Gambling

RFI to Develop Brief on the Coverage of Gambling Addiction as a Part of the Essential Behavioral Health Benefit

3rd Draft-January 23, 2014

Statement of need – The National Council on Problem Gambling requests information from prospective vendors in order to develop an information brief on gambling addiction, insurance coverage and the ACA. The document will have several major sections. The first is a brief review of current status of public and private gambling addiction treatment reimbursement. The second is a policy brief advocating for the coverage of gambling addiction as part of the essential behavioral health benefit. The third is an advocacy guide for policy holders, counselors and problem gambling advocates to implement the policy brief at the state level. We also invite respondents to include a supplemental section on how Medicare and Medicaid address gambling addiction and strategies to address any shortfalls in coverage.

Gambling addiction is a national public health issue. NCPG believes the ACA mandates coverage of behavioral health, the DSM 5 categorizes gambling disorder as a behavioral addiction, there are evidence based treatments for gambling addiction known to be efficacious and cost-effective, and therefore insurance plans must cover gambling addiction services. Additionally, the brief will include overview of evidence-based treatments for gambling addiction, cost/benefit analysis and case studies of existing public and private programs. Currently, many problem gamblers are unable to access care because many insurance plans do not routinely provide coverage for gambling addiction services. Few counselors pursue certification for gambling counseling since reimbursement for services is often limited.

Research questions to be addressed

Section 1

• Why is gambling addiction a national public health issue and why is insurance coverage important?
  o Participation, prevalence and social cost
  o Overview of current service delivery system
  o Barriers to care

Section 2

• What are the implications of the Affordable Care Act and the behavioral health essential benefit for coverage of gambling treatment?
  o Other disorders specifically included and/or excluded?
• How will the new categorization of gambling disorder in the DSM 5 impact insurance coverage?
Review history of gambling in the DSM from III to 5.

- What evidence exists on the effectiveness of gambling treatment?
  - Findings from studies with acceptable degree of rigor

- What evidence exists or could be developed to establish treatment cost-effectiveness?
  - Existing cost-effectiveness studies
  - Case studies of successful public and private programs

Section 3

- How can an effective effort be mounted to persuade insurance plans regulated and sold at the state level to include problem gambling treatment in their plans?
  - “Road Map” for advocacy to:
    - State insurance commissioners, SSA directors
    - Counselors seeking reimbursement
    - Policy holders seeking coverage
  - Sample, simple templates and tools

Optional

- What is required for gambling addiction services to be eligible for Medicaid and/or Medicare reimbursement?
  - Review of states currently billing Medicaid for gambling addiction assessment and treatment and their policy and procedures
  - Are these processes relevant for Medicare coverage questions?

Contractor Qualification Preferences –

Experience in the following areas:

- Application of quantitative and qualitative analytical tools, methods, and techniques, including designing and conducting literature reviews and environmental scans, case studies, and cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit studies
- Expertise in identifying evidence-based practices
- Ability to leverage existing relationships with and knowledge of states and community-based organizations involved in problem gambling treatment
- Understanding of relevant policy and programmatic issues, including expertise in Medicaid/Medicare policy and Affordable Care Act implementation

Format:

- Executive Summary—maximum two pages
- Main Report
• Appendices as necessary
• Published electronically

Response:

Please reply by February xx with information that will inform NCPG’s project bid, including suggestions on scope of work, time required, process, projected outputs, vendor qualifications and estimated cost. NCPG may issue a RFP or negotiate a directed contract with respondents.