



The Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling is Raising Awareness on National Gambling Disorder Screening Day

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 8, 2022

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March is National Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM) in the United States, an annual event that increases public awareness about problem gambling, and the availability of prevention, treatment, and recovery services. Another emphasis is to encourage healthcare providers to screen clients for problem gambling and to urge non-healthcare professionals, such as community groups, governmental bodies, academic institutions, and others to serve as supporters by spreading the message that recovery from a gambling addiction is possible for those who seek help. For more than 30 years, the Florida Council on Compulsive Gambling (FCCG) has operated the Sunshine State's 24-hour confidential and multilingual 888-ADMIT-IT HelpLine, has provided resources and services to thousands of individuals and families in need of assistance, and has furnished training and additional supports to gambling operators, educators, health care practitioners, and others.

Supporters can visit the FCCG's Problem Gambling Awareness Month microsite at problemgamblingawarenessmonth.org to learn more about PGAM and ways to become involved.

Tuesday, March 8th is National Gambling Disorder Screening Day, which urges medical, mental health, and other health care professionals to serve as hosts this Screening Day by conducting a quick 3-question assessment on patients who present with various physical and emotional difficulties to determine whether further evaluation for a gambling problem may be warranted. **“Conducting a preliminary screening for a gambling disorder is quick, painless and can be lifesaving for patients who may be silently suffering. Unfortunately, these quick screens are typically not performed and are routinely overlooked by health care providers during annual visits and when questioning clients about their alcohol, substance, and tobacco use,” explained Jennifer Kruse, the FCCG's Executive Director.** Therefore, when clients present in offices or emergency room settings with physical and emotional ailments, such as high blood pressure, heart palpitations, anxiety, migraines, depression, sleep difficulties, or other health concerns, medical, mental health, and addiction professionals need to be certain they are performing preliminary screening for a gambling problem. Screenings are equally imperative when clients report difficulties with alcohol and other substances, given incidences of comorbidity for gambling disorder among these populations.

“National Gambling Disorder Screening Day is one day each year. However, it serves as a gentle reminder that assessments for gambling addiction are worthy to perform year-round,” explained Kruse. “It is important for Floridians to know that when gambling is no longer a game, 888-ADMIT-IT is the game plan! HelpLine services are available around the clock and are free and confidential. In addition to offering self-help and professional resources and referrals, 888-ADMIT-IT provides an Online Program for Problem Gamblers that is completely free!”, Kruse concluded.

Gambling disorder is often identified when a person has progressed to the latter stages of the disorder, so early detection is essential to help mitigate the severity of issues one experiences late in the addiction. Non-health care providers, such as individuals and organizations serving youth, senior citizens, veterans, and others, are urged to participate in Screening Day as supporters by posting and distributing information, and by raising awareness in the workplace, at home, in the community and elsewhere! To learn more, visit the Problem Gambling Awareness Month microsite.

Kick off Problem Gambling Awareness Month by completing a quick screen for gambling disorder today at problemgamblingawarenessmonth.org/BBGS. If you answer “yes” to one or more of the three questions, contact the multilingual HelpLine by phone (888-ADMIT-IT (236-4848), text (321-978-0555), email (fccg@gamblinghelp.org), live chat (gamblinghelp.org), the [888-ADMIT-IT App](#), or by connecting on social media, such as Facebook and Twitter to begin your path to recovery and healing one day at a time.