MARG Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 2, 2015

Location: Center of Excellence

**Present**: Mary Drexler, Matthew Heiskell, Skylar Dice, Gordon Medenica, Jennifer Wetherell, Herb Cromwell, Sandra Davis Hart, John Martin, Michael Eaton, Evan Richards, Jasmine Countess, Carole Everett, Seth Elkin, Tom Coppinger, Doug Shipley, Rachel Szukala, Tamala Law, Michael Hundt, Lori Rugle, Rob White, Sweta Maheshwari, Ardenia Holland, James Butler, Charles LaBoy, Patrick McArdle, Kate Tracey

**Action Items**:

* Mary Drexler will develop VEP translation service training for compliance staff; she will also contact the casinos about shortened problem gambling messaging.

Meeting Called to Order:

Charles LaBoy called the meeting to order at 12:06 pm.

General Introductions and Discussion:

Charles thanked the members for their attendance and introduced new Maryland Lottery and Gaming (ML&G) Director, Gordon Medenica. Gordon discussed the agency’s efforts to gain Level 2 certification with the World Lottery Association (WLA), which sets benchmarking standards for responsible gambling in the gaming industry. Charles then distributed a handout detailing the WLA’s principles.

Member Updates:

1. Behavioral Health Administration: Ardenia Holland deferred updates to Lori Rugle, who disseminated the Center of Excellence’s quarterly helpline report. Lori stated that the Center’s targeted ad campaigns have received significant response. She also handed out a helpful flyer on problem gambling that was issued by the state of Ohio. Kate Tracey, from the University of Maryland, discussed the National Conference on Problem Gambling. She mentioned the data her team has gathered on community experiences with casinos in their areas.
2. Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency:
* *Shortened message for limited gaming advertising*: Charles detailed the agency’s efforts to develop more concise messaging; staff will be in touch with the casinos about this.
* *Update on violations subcommittee discussion*: The subcommittee met and discussed ways for individuals to seek help for gambling addiction.
* *Update on presentation for judges*: Mary distributed an informational flyer developed by the agency and plans to meet with a subcommittee of judges to present the information. She is hoping this meeting will occur in early October.
* *Translation phone line*: In response to subcommittee discussions about the translation process, ML&G has secured a service that offers over 40 languages. Mary will distribute directions on its use to the compliance officers.
* *Other*: Around 910 individuals are active on the VEP list. Additionally, ML&G is looking to transition to a database whereby casinos can review and access VEP information. The technical specifications have been developed and the agency is working on the IT security component.
1. Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services: The department has a new assessment contract out for bid that will help track data identifying problem gambling.
2. Maryland Judiciary: N/A
3. Maryland Council on Problem Gambling: Michael Hundt stated that the National Conference on Problem Gambling went very well and had a high attendance rate. He distributed materials from his agency and highlighted a press release from the Council.
4. Maryland State Senate: Evan Richards, representing Senator Klausmeier, inquired about how insurance companies are handling problem gambling addiction. Lori responded that the Center of Excellence plans to gather and track data on this.
5. Maryland House of Delegates: N/A
6. Gaming Facilities
	1. Hollywood Casino Perryville: The casino is proud to have sponsored the July MARG meeting and just completed annual responsible gambling training for their employees.
	2. Ocean Downs Casino: N/A
	3. Maryland Live! Casino: The casino held responsible gambling training for their employees, which included fun activities and wristband giveaways.
	4. Rocky Gap Casino: The casino recently wrapped up their responsible gambling training.
	5. Horseshoe Baltimore Casino: The casino is currently completing their second round of responsible gambling training with staff.

Open Discussion:

Mary created a responsible gambling training webinar for bingo hall employees; around 265 of them have completed the training.

Based on subcommittee discussions, ML&G is looking into offering a free problem gambling assessment option for those who sign up for the VEP program. Lori would like a community of providers to assist with this eventually, if this initiative proceeds.

Lori also mentioned that the Center of Excellence has developed a new problem gambling web page.

Next Meeting:

December 2, 2015, from 11a.m. – 1 p.m. at Maryland Live.