MARG Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, May 17, 2017

Location: Ocean Downs Casino

**Present**: Mary Drexler, Jasmine Countess, Rachel Carpenter, Gray Barton, Tamala Law, Kathy Rebbert-Franklin, Barbara Bazron, Ardenia Holland, Jason Bittenger, Eugenia Connolly, Rebecca Gilbert, Jennifer Wetherell, Marissa Ruthven, Mary Ruggiani, Kate Tracy, Crystal Layton, Cindy Romeo, Jim Nielsen, and Jeannie Magdefrau

**Action Items**:

* Mary will provide a breakdown of violations by county on a semi-annual basis to Gray Barton.
* Mary will discuss hosting of an electronic database with Kate Tracy.
* Mary will reach out to Kate Tracy regarding study data.
* Mary will have further discussions with the Center of Excellence about warm transfers.

Meeting Called to Order:

Mary Drexler called the meeting to order at 12:27 p.m.

General Introductions:

The MARG members introduced themselves.

Member Updates:

1. **Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency**

*Leaving of Charles LaBoy from MLGCA*

Mary announced the departure of former Managing Director of Gaming, Charles LaBoy, who went to head a tribal gaming commission in Michigan.

*Responsible Gambling Electronic Database*

Mary stated that there is no money in the state budget to fund an electronic VEP database.

Barbara Bazron inquired about the estimated cost for an electronic database and asked if it would be internet based. She also asked if it could be hosted anywhere else. Jim Nielsen responded that it would not be internet based; according to estimates given to Mary, the database could cost upwards of 100k.

Kate Tracy stated that an electronic system would not need to be difficult or expensive to create. The University of Maryland could do the hosting piece. Mary said she may have a discussion with Kate about this.

Rachel Carpenter stated that an electronic database would relieve Maryland Lottery and Gaming of what is to come. Some jurisdictions have 50k people on their VEP lists. This has to become an electronic database and data entry personnel need to be hired to maintain it.

Dr. Bazron stated that more discussions should be held offline on this. She would like to return to the group with a proposal. Jim said he would be open to this, and Kate will follow up with Mary on this as well.

*Update from MLGCA on the Voluntarily Excluded Patrons List*

Mary reviewed the current VEP numbers. 30-40 people per month are signing up for voluntary exclusion.

*MARG website*

Mary is working with the agency’s creative team to make the website as user-friendly as possible.

*Secure advisory emails coming*

Secure advisory VEP emails have been going out to the casinos. The emails are password-protected and encrypted. Mary is working to fix the print-layout issue with agency IT staff.

1. **Behavioral Health Administration (Barbara Bazron):**

Dr. Bazron is interested in getting people the help they need. She is working with her staff to ensure funding is going to support end-users. She would like to have more discussions on this matter and would like to use the available funds in the best possible manner.

Dr. Bazron is also interested in using recovery specialists on site at the casinos. Mary stated she would investigate the possibility of warm transfers to counselors.

Mary would like a tracking mechanism implemented by the Center of Excellence for those requesting further contact with counselors via the VEP application.

Kathy Rebbert-Franklin stated she would like to beef up public awareness of problem gambling in various ways and streamline the manner in which funds are made available. Recently, DHMH moved to a fee-for-service arrangement. Lori Rugle is working to ensure providers have been trained in problem gambling.

1. **Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling (Lori Rugle)**:

The Center will be hiring six peer support specialists to help engage people in the recovery and treatment process. Lori will work with Mary to have these people available for warm transfers if warm transfers become possible.

The Center continues to work with the local county health departments on problem gambling initiatives.

A few ad campaigns have been rolled out.

Kate stated that having data on peer support would be powerful to policy makers and help identify pinch points in the pipeline for people accessing treatment. Kate is evaluating costs for potentially providing treatment to problem gamblers and is examining traffic patterns/accidents around the casino related to alcohol consumption. Mary would like to see the surveys on this study so she can circulate them with the minutes.

1. **Department of Public Safety and Correctional Service (DPSCS):** N/A
2. **Maryland** **Judiciary (Gray Barton):**

Gray has heard about the increasing amount of VEPs coming into the courts and the possibility of creating a specialized docket for them. Gray requested a breakdown of violations by county so that the courts can consider consolidating the docket; this breakdown would need to be provided on a semi-annual basis.

Mary stated she is working with the Prince George’s County diversionary court; in this court, if individuals are willing to go for problem gambling assessments, their cases would be dismissed.

1. **Maryland Council on Problem Gambling (Tamala Law)**

11 participants from the religious community completed problem gambling training. MCPG is working on modules 3 and 4, which will be rolled out in August; MCPG will also be rolling out a website and logo.

1. **Maryland State Senate:** N/A
2. **Maryland House of Delegates**: N/A
3. **Gaming** **facilities (updates):**
   * 1. Hollywood Casino Perryville (Jeannie Magdefrau):

The Green Turtle opened at the casino in March. Security staff has been working to keep out minors, with zero violations this year so far.

* + 1. Ocean Downs Casino (Crystal Layton):

The casino has not had any underage violations. They are now owned by Churchill Downs and are excited about new property developments.

* + 1. Maryland Live! Casino (Rachel Carpenter):

The casino is building a hotel, constructing one floor per week. There will be 17 or 18 floors and over 300 rooms; this will open sometime next year. The casino also recently did problem gambling training with their employees.

* + 1. Rocky Gap Casino (Jason Bittinger):

There were no underage or VEP violations for the first quarter of 2017. The casino will be rolling out responsible gambling training in June or July. They are in their busy season and are renovating their backyard area.

* + 1. Horseshoe Baltimore Casino (Marissa Ruthven):

Alex Dixon left the company and Jacqueline Grace is now the new assistant manager at the casino. Employees completed their responsible gambling ambassador training in February.

* + 1. MGM (Tamala Law): MGM will be revisiting the VEP program with their team, differentiating between self-limited, and VEP individuals.

Open Discussion

No comments.

Next Meeting:

Hollywood Casino Perryville

The meeting ended at 1:31 p.m.