

Gambling: an addiction with serious implications.

This is the first in a two-part series on Horizon's new gambling addiction counseling program.

A gambling disorder was long considered a behavioral problem or character flaw. Its symptoms were difficult to uncover, and those with a gambling problem were extremely reluctant to admit to it. Family members, close friends and co-workers were often unaware or also hesitant to bring the problem to light. Compulsive gamblers typically ran up credit card debt, passed bad checks, emptied family bank accounts and committed other crimes to support their habit, and were given total culpability and little leniency by the court system. As the problem grew, instances of personal bankruptcies, suicides and divorce soared.

In 1980 the American Psychiatric Association incorporated "pathological gambling" into its diagnostic and statistical manual, legitimizing disordered gambling as a psychiatric illness within the mainstream mental health field. Today gambling is considered to be a "disease of impulse control."

Statistics show that roughly five percent of New York residents have a gambling problem. In Western New York, however, that percentage is higher and, in 2003, there was a 15 percent increase in personal bankruptcies in Erie County. According to the Honorable Mark G. Farrell, who presides over the Amherst Drug Court, there was also an increase in fraud and larceny crimes.

"We began to see a different type of person appearing in court," says Judge Farrell. "They were professionals – mostly entrepreneurs – with higher education and a stable family life. They were passing bad checks, committing credit card fraud. They were compulsive gamblers. It had become very problematic."

The addition of several gaming facilities in WNY has made the problem more apparent; however, the lottery, bingo games, sports and even the Internet have provided opportunities for people to get seriously involved with gambling.

Several organizations, including Horizon, worked to set up a "disease-based court" that offered therapeutic justice in addition to legal action. In the three years since gambling court was established in Amherst, nearly 70 people have been screened, with 15 so far successfully completing the program and more entering the program every day.

"There are multiple external and internal factors that contribute to a gambling problem," says Maria Rivett, Horizon's vice president of program development. "With the presence of such environmental toxins as gaming facilities and professional sporting events, gamblers become extremely vulnerable and less resilient to these temptations.

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Carleton James Photography

From the desk of...

Hak Ko
Medical Director

There is an old saying, "A sound mind is a sound body." Modern science is proving that to be true through studies which show a link between mental well-being and its positive effects on the course of many physical diseases.

Given this link between mind and body, it's ironic that most of the drugs we use to treat mental illness have some serious physical side effects. We all remember Jack Nicholson's character in *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest*, who was robbed of his infectious smile and vitality as a result of such anti-psychotic drugs like Thorazine.

We eagerly welcomed the arrival of newer drugs that held the promise of a much more benign side effect profile. Our enthusiasm, however, has been dampened with warnings regarding significant metabolic side effects of these drugs, including risk of diabetes, weight gain and elevated cholesterol levels. Considering the increased health concerns and society's emphasis on physical fitness, these side effects may pose a serious challenge to medication adherence.

This is the most important fact: a person's choices and lifestyle can significantly impact and change the outcome of these potentially serious side effects. No evidence exists that says a certain drug alone can cause diabetes. We encourage a commitment to health and recovery that includes exercise and a proper diet. Positive changes in these areas will significantly reduce health risks and give the person a sense of control over his or her own body.

Horizon Health Services offers several programs to help people in their efforts to gain this control. Working together, we can really see the effect of our minds on our bodies. ♥

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FOCUS ON FAMILY pays dividends in continuing treatment

Considerable research shows that involvement of family members or significant others helps consumers seek treatment or, if already in treatment, assists with contemplation of change, involvement and retention in the therapeutic process and, therefore, a more successful recovery. A three-year study of family involvement with treatment is pointing to some unique directions for treatment of consumers at Horizon.

“Our goal is to provide the best treatment process to aptly assist consumers and their families in dealing with mental health and chemical dependency issues as part of the ongoing care we offer,” says Horizon CEO Anne Constantino. “Our direction with families has four specific components: to incorporate the strengths and support of family as part of the recovery process; to offer supportive family services as part of the treatment process; to be a significant leader in the area of providing holistic family services and to offer significant research material in the area of coordinated health services to consumers and families.”

Each of the components involving families in treatment draws on information and research provided by Best Practices. Studies suggest that when families are educated, trained and supported, relapse rates among consumers are remarkably lowered.

Brenda John-Banach, senior coordinator of Erie County outpatient services, who currently chairs the Family Best Practice Committee, says, “We are able to provide direct clinical support for persons with chemical dependencies and/or



Dave Schaefer conducts a Focus on Family session at Horizon Village. mental health issues. Each service site offers semi-annual invitations to consumer family members to acquaint them with the variety of services offered, as well as quarterly multifamily education programs. Our goal is to engage with the family as early as possible in treatment.”

Horizon Village has a long history of providing family services. “We begin with the reality that each member affects the family and the family affects each member in a reciprocal and dynamic way,” says Dr. David Schaefer, director of Horizon Village’s Family Program. “We are advocates for involving families in treatment because we know that, statistically, families involved in treatment make a difference.”

Horizon consumer, John C., says, “I already know how important it was for my family to be part of my recovery. If nothing else it gave them a sense of what I was going through on a daily basis, and allowed us to make important decisions together. I’m appreciative of that.”

For more information on Horizon’s Focus on Families program, call Rick Salada at 716.833.3708. ♥

work with. It’s very obvious they all care about each other and our consumers so much. That’s made the transition very easy for me.”

Tara came from Lakeshore Behavioral Health, where she worked for four years as part of the Steps-IPRT (Intensive Psychological Rehabilitative Treatment) Program. She likes that she’s in more of a supervisory role at Horizon, and that she can be involved in helping to make Horizon’s program look more like an IPRT program.

“Horizon is great about doing whatever needs to be done to better serve our consumers,” says Tara. “We’re incorporating more skills-building

MEET OUR Board

Name:
Heather Rose Groll

Title: Director of
Public Relations,
The SKM Group

HHS Boards:
Heather serves on
the Horizon Health
Services and Horizon Village boards.



Photographer: Michael Groll

How did you come to be on the HHS Board? “During the year I spent with Anne Constantino in the Leadership Buffalo program, I had the opportunity to learn a great deal about Horizon, its mission, goals and challenges. Joining the boards was a natural extension of my respect for what Horizon has achieved and my desire to take an active role in its future.”

What have you found most rewarding about serving on the board? “As a new board member, I have found it extremely enlightening to witness the strides Horizon has made structurally and with its programs, especially in light of difficult economic conditions. The dedication of everyone associated with this organization is a model example of how a not-for-profit should be run.”

What do you want people to know about Horizon? “People who look to Horizon for help for themselves or someone they love can be confident they will be treated with dignity and respect.” ♥

and coping skills efforts into our groups to better assist our consumers in dealing with everyday life. That’s so important for them.”

A graduate of Hilbert College where she received a BA in Psychology, Tara received a Masters of Science degree from the University at Buffalo. Recently married, Tara is the mother of a three-year-old son and a 13-year-old step-daughter. She says she very much looks forward to being a major part of the PROs initiative at Horizon and “helping to make a great program even better.” ♥

Hello
My name is
Tara Karoleski
Supervising Senior
Counselor, Bailey-
Kensington Continuing
Day Treatment Center



Tara Karoleski, M.S., C.R.C.

Tara Karoleski has only been with Horizon Health Services since February, but she already has settled in to become part of the team.

“There’s such a homey feeling here,” says Tara. “Everyone is so personable and so easy to

theRoadtoRecovery

Here is the true story of a consumer who overcame many obstacles with the help of Horizon Health Services to turn his life around. Last names have been omitted for privacy.

At 17, Daryl has already seen a lifetime of sadness and hardship. His father was murdered shortly before Daryl was born. About a year ago, his mother died very suddenly and unexpectedly, leaving Daryl – the youngest of four children – an orphan and pretty much on his own.

Daryl began experimenting with drugs – mostly marijuana – when he was a young teenager. His drug problem led to behavior problems and, after several jail stays, Daryl got involved with the Amherst Town Drug Court. He and his mom also began attending Horizon's parent/adolescent program and, in fact, had just completed the program when Daryl's mom died.

Daryl tried living with his oldest sister and her family after his mom died, but that meant leaving his Sweet Home School District and transferring to another suburban school district, which Daryl didn't like as much. When that living arrangement didn't work out, Daryl went to live with his brother, but that situation proved not to be ideal either. Soon, the courts intervened.

Daryl was placed at the Franciscan Center in South Buffalo. The Sweet Home School District agreed to allow Daryl to start back at his old high school, and even arranged for a bus to take Daryl back and forth between the Center and the school each day. The District also referred Daryl to Horizon Health Services. His grades began to improve and he settled back into a routine he was comfortable with. It was the kindness of so many people who believed in this young boy that has helped

Daryl get his life back on track after so many setbacks.

Daryl credits his individual and group sessions at Horizon and his counselor, Marcia Valente, with being a very positive influence in his life. "She listens to me, and she gets me to talk about things I would never talk about to other people," says Daryl. "She's been a great help to me whenever I get depressed." Daryl says he's also seen firsthand how many of his friends have benefited from attending the Horizon program.

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Marcia says she has been amazed at Daryl's resiliency and how he has endeared himself to school personnel, court liaisons and the Horizon staff.

She's very happy about the way Daryl has persevered and continued to focus on the future and not the past.

"Daryl's story is very much a testament to the strength of the human spirit," says Marcia.

Completely drug free for six months now, Daryl is looking forward to graduating from the drug court program in a few weeks, and to his senior year in high school. An accomplished cook, he attends the culinary program at BOCES and hopes to go on to a nearby college to learn more about cooking and baking (his true passion). Daryl's goal in five years is to have graduated from college and be running his own restaurant somewhere in Western New York. With his continued focus and desire to stay on track, there's little doubt Daryl will accomplish whatever he sets out to do. ❤️

Horizon counselor receives ADDS award.

Each year, Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services (ADDS) recognizes one adolescent and one adult who have demonstrated the ability to successfully recover from chemical dependency. The Courage to Come Back Award acknowledges the recipients' ability to use their recovery to enhance the quality of life in the community and to help others in similar situations. This year's adult recipient is Walter Pierce, who was nominated for the award by Horizon CEO Anne Constantino. Walter graduated from Horizon Village and is now a part-time addictions counselor at Horizon's Bailey-LaSalle office. He is also a member of the Recovery Alliance and is president of Horizon's Community Advisory Board. In June 2005, Walter will graduate from UB's Advanced Standing Program, where he will receive his Master's degree in social work. He recently received the Arthur O. Eve student achievement award for academic achievement and community involvement.

Walter has been dealing with an addiction to drugs and alcohol since his early twenties. He has been 100 percent clean since 1996, and credits Horizon with helping his recovery.

"Horizon and Horizon Village helped me greatly", says Walter "I found my self-esteem increased tremendously as I was able to reach out and help others. That made all the difference for me."

"Walter's spirituality and commitment to recovery have been an inspiration to the board, staff and many consumers," says Anne Constantino. "Walter helps us all stay focused on the goals and values of Horizon."

Walter says he is very pleased to receive the award from ADDS. "I feel like I owe a great deal because I've been given so much," he says. "I'd like to tell anyone dealing with addiction to never give up. As long as there is life, there is hope."

Congratulations Walter! ❤️

One in four American adults has received treatment for a mental health problem in the past two years in the form of talk therapy, medication or a combination of the two.

Horizon's acupuncture program honored.

At this year's National Acupuncture Detoxification Association (NADA) conference, Horizon's acupuncture programs and Horizon Director of Acupuncture, Pamm Pernick, were honored with a special achievement award for the number of acupuncture programs at Horizon, the large number of staff members trained to do acupuncture and the innovative work Horizon has done in this area.

Horizon uses auricular acupuncture to assist consumers in addiction recovery. Acupuncture has been proven to curb cravings for drugs and alcohol.

"This award is a credit to the staff of Horizon and Horizon Village," says Pamm. "It is an indication of their level of commitment to our consumers. I am very proud of everyone – staff and consumers – who helped make Horizon's acupuncture program the success it is." ♥

Celebrate with Horizon Village!

This year, Horizon Village—our 50-bed inpatient residential treatment facility for chemically-dependent adults—is celebrating its tenth anniversary of service. We will commemorate this special occasion with a reception at Horizon Village in September. For more information, please call Pat Chrzanowski at (716) 831-1800. ♥

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"The process of treating someone for a gambling addiction is very similar to treatment for a drug addiction," continues Rivett. "Many of the same techniques are used, and that's why Horizon believes we can make a difference in the lives of many consumers by offering a gambling addiction counseling program."

For more information on gambling addiction counseling at Horizon, call Maria Rivett, at 831.1800. ♥

Our main phone number to call for referrals, emergencies or other consumer issues is our Central Intake Number: (716) 831-1800.

HorizonHealthPulse is published for the employees, consumers, Board and friends of Horizon Health Services. Please share this newsletter with a friend. If you would like additional copies of this newsletter or if you have any questions or comments about its content, please call Pat Chrzanowski at 716-831-1800 or email her at pchrzanowski@horizon-health.org.

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HORIZON
HEALTH SERVICES

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How loved ones help in recovery.
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