

## OCTOBER 2009 COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

In October the Council did a six hour lecture at New Views on gambling and did a presentation to Intensive Supervision Program professionals. In addition, we attended health fairs, or conferences conducted by the Governor's Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, United Way of Bloomfield, International Coalition of Addictions Studies Educators , the Southwest Alliance and the Senior Alliance in Atlantic City.

The council remained actively involved with the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG). Jeff Beck attended a two day NCPG Board retreat in Los Angeles and is once again heading National Problem Gambling Awareness Week; in 2010 it is March 7- March 13. The Council has been an active advocate of HR 2906 - The Comprehensive Problem Gambling Act. Compulsive gambling services have always been provided at the state level. This bill would establish Federal oversight of problem gambling activities through SAMHSA and would provide \$71 million over five years for treatment, research and public awareness. The Council has written each of New Jersey's House of Representative members urging support for this legislation and we have met with one Representative's office.

The Council oversees New Jersey's statewide a gambling treatment network, which is comprised of 12 agencies and individual providers who have met certain requirements and standards. This network provides services to problem gamblers and families in need, which the Council pays on a fee-for-service basis. In October 140 different clients attended 412 sessions. We see treatment oversight as a major goal of the Council.

There were 1,536 calls made to the Gambling Helpline, 149 of these resulted in intakes and referrals to treatment and Gamblers Anonymous. One lady called who works at a lottery outlet and is out of control with her gambling. A dealer in Atlantic City called about a boyfriend who was out of control playing roulette. These calls show that knowledge of the odds and an understanding of gambling are not enough to prevent problem gambling, which is an illness that overcomes reason. Continued gambling despite adverse consequences is one of the telltale signs of compulsive gambling.