

The Epidemic in Your Pocket—Stopping the Gamblification of Everything through Education and Advocacy

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SUBMISSION DETAILS

Workshop Summary The rapid expansion of commercialized and digital gambling has created a growing public health crisis, driven in part by industry practices designed to maximize engagement and spending among vulnerable populations. Predatory gambling refers to exploitative practices—including targeted marketing, high-velocity betting, near-miss reinforcement, and personalized behavioral tracking—that increase risk for addiction and harm. These strategies disproportionately affect adolescents, young adults, and individuals with psychiatric comorbidities, while remaining largely unaddressed within standard clinical training.

Despite increasing prevalence of gambling-related harm, current approaches often focus on individual responsibility and treatment after harm has occurred, rather than addressing underlying structural and commercial drivers. Evidence suggests that a substantial portion of gambling industry revenue is derived from individuals experiencing harmful use, highlighting the need for broader public health and policy responses.

This workshop will provide clinicians with a framework for understanding predatory gambling as a systems-level issue and equip them with practical tools for advocacy. Participants will examine real-world examples of industry practices, analyze the intersection of gambling expansion and mental health outcomes, and review current policy gaps and regulatory challenges. Drawing on recent position statements and advocacy efforts, the session will outline actionable strategies for physicians to engage in policy conversations, educate patients and communities, and promote evidence-based protections.

Workshop Interaction and Engagement Methods Multi-media usage - If you are considering integrating video clips or other media platforms, please inform AAAP staff prior to your workshop to ensure that the room and AV are adequately set up.

Interactive Plan Description Through watching clips from various documentaries as well as interactive discussion and applied exercises, participants will develop skills to translate clinical insight into effective advocacy, helping shift the field from a solely treatment-focused model to a comprehensive approach addressing prevention, regulation, and population-level harm.

Writing Educational Learning Objectives

Please list at least three (3) brief learning objectives below.

Learning Objective 1 Describe the structural and commercial drivers of gambling-related harm, including predatory industry practices such as targeted marketing, high-velocity betting, and behavioral reinforcement mechanisms.

Learning Objective 2 Analyze the limitations of individual-focused responsibility and treatment models and apply a public health framework that incorporates prevention, regulation, and population-level risk reduction.

Learning Objective 3 Develop practical advocacy strategies for clinicians, including engaging with policymakers, contributing to position statements, and educating patients and communities about gambling-related risks and protections.