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## **The Big Game & Gambling**

*An Opportunity to Have the Conversation*

PENNSYLVANIA (January 31, 2018) – Annually, the amount of money being wagered on the Big Game continues to escalate, with total bets (legal and illegal) soaring into the billions. This year is no different. Early estimates reveal that the amount of legal wagers alone will exceed the previous record of \$138.5 million, which was set last year.

While most individuals who participate in these betting activities will have little, or no, negative repercussions, for some, this could be very problematic. It is estimated that nearly 300,000 individuals in Pennsylvania are experiencing issues related to their gambling activity – the number of folks who are at risk of developing significant problems is even higher.

The Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania, Inc. (CCGP) raises awareness of these issues throughout Pennsylvania, and focuses on educating the public on help that is available. "For sports fans, this time of the year is very exciting in our country, but for some, it can be a tipping point. This year, we have a team from PA playing in the game, so the focus is that much greater. As we get closer to this Sunday's game, we encourage everyone to 'Have the Conversation\*' with friends and family members who may be suffering from a gambling problem, or may be at risk for developing one. Please remember, there is always help available – you are not alone," states Josh Ercole, CCGP Chief Operating Officer.

In Pennsylvania, confidential help is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling 1-800-GAMBLER® or 1-800-848-1880. In addition, confidential help is available via chat or text at [www.pacouncil.com](http://www.pacouncil.com). For more information, please visit [www.pacouncil.com](http://www.pacouncil.com), where you can find additional resources and a complete list of Gamblers Anonymous/Gam-Anon meetings throughout PA.

**Gambling Disorder can impact anyone. With help, recovery is possible.**

### **About the Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania, Inc.**

*The Council on Compulsive Gambling of Pennsylvania is a nonprofit organization whose focus is to raise awareness and disseminate information through educational workshops on disordered gambling, and to facilitate referrals for assistance through the use of helpline services. For more information about the Council and its' services, visit [www.pacouncil.com](http://www.pacouncil.com).*

\*'Have the Conversation' is the tagline of the National Council on Problem Gambling's (NCPG) initiative, Problem Gambling Awareness Month (PGAM). PGAM takes place annually during the month of March.

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