

Impact of MGM Springfield on Gambling Attitudes, Participation & Problem Gambling

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Background

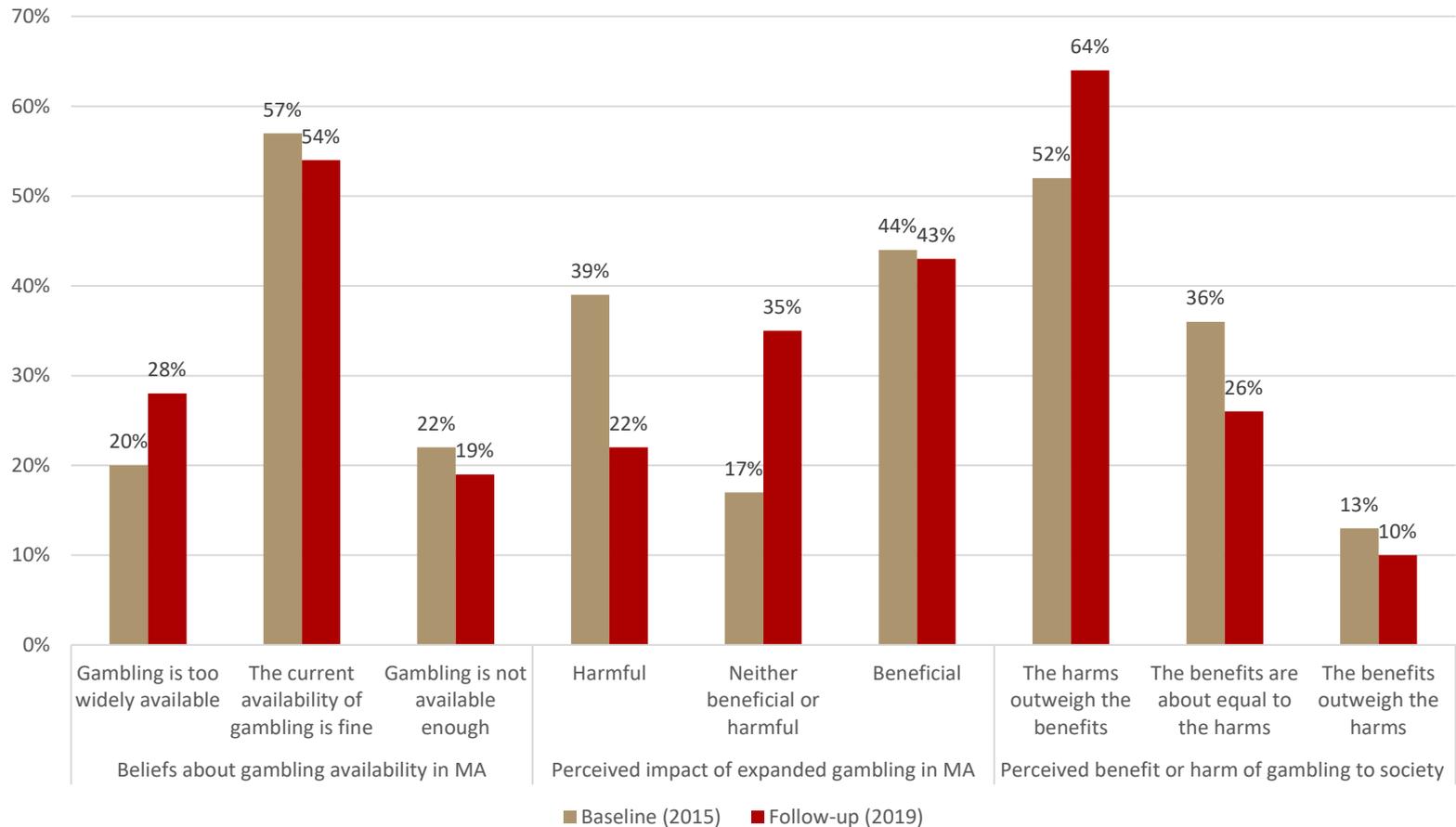
- Original research plan called for population surveys to understand and monitor:
 - Gambling attitudes
 - Gambling behavior
 - Prevalence (% of population experiencing gambling problems)
- Focus on Springfield & surrounding communities
 - Baseline survey conducted in 2015
 - Follow-up survey conducted in 2019, one year after opening of MGM Springfield
- Findings intended to inform development of strategies to minimize gambling harm and ensure greatest possible benefit of expanded gaming to Commonwealth

Comparing the Surveys

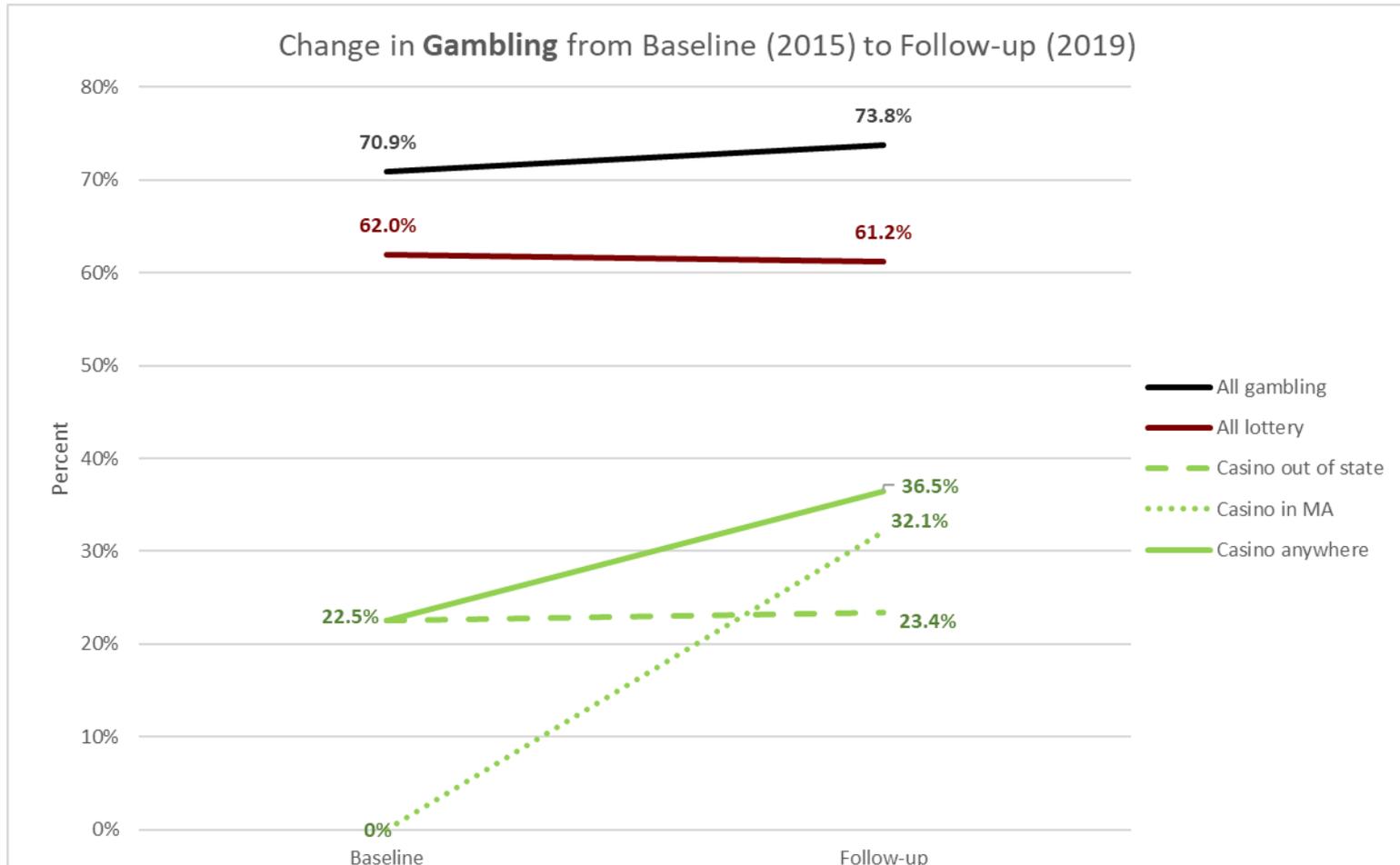
- Two surveys of adult residents (18+) of Springfield & surrounding communities
- Respondents able to complete online, paper (SAQ), or telephone
- 2019 survey used lists to increase the proportion of Black, Hispanic & Asian respondents
- Final samples weighted to align with population

	2015	2019
Dates	Feb 2015 – June 2015	Oct 2019 – Jan 2020
Response rate	31.7%	16.7%
Final sample size	1,131	1,134
% self-administered (Web, SAQ)	90%	89%
Completed in Spanish	2.5%	14.7%

Attitudes Toward Gambling



Gambling Participation



Key Informant Insights

“The places where local people purchase lottery products (i.e., keno, scratch tickets) are like ‘little gambling parlors’ and those people frequent those lottery outlets just as much after as they did before the casino was open... this constituency of folks continue to visit the bodegas where they can see their friends, visit with the same set of people, and it becomes a social gathering place. The casino has not filled that role.”

– Frank Robinson, Vice President, Public Health and Community Relations, Baystate Health Systems

Key Informant Insights

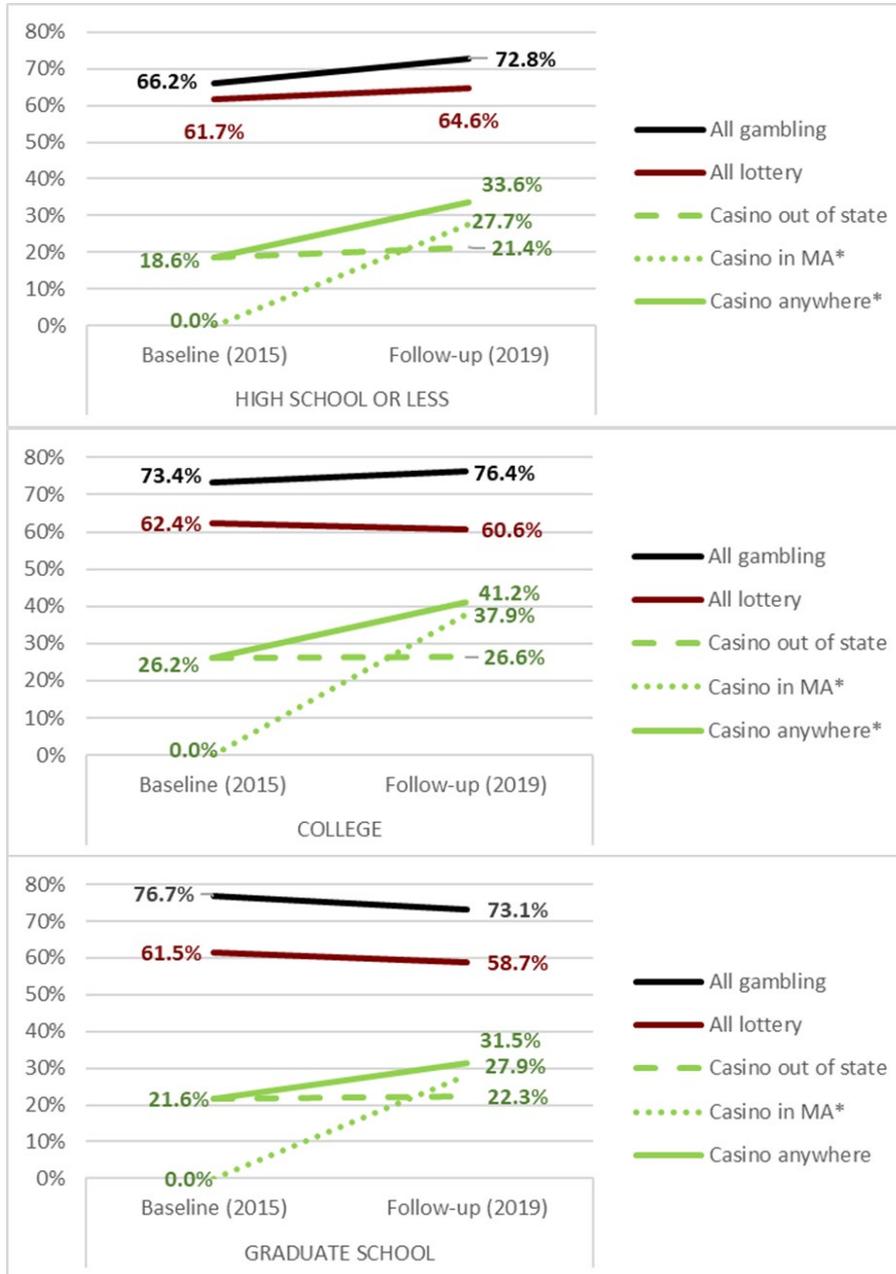
“But as I interact with the public, people have expressed they have family members and friends who love gambling, [and that] has increased since the casino has been here because [it is] so accessible.”

– Ronn Johnson, President and CEO, Martin Luther King, Jr. Family Services

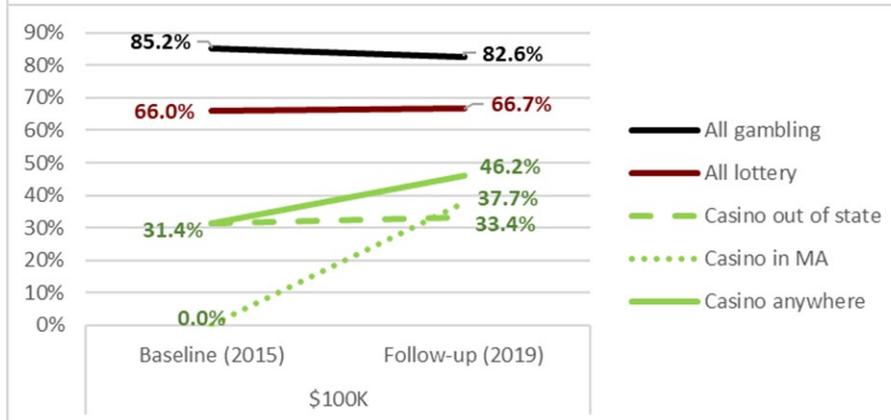
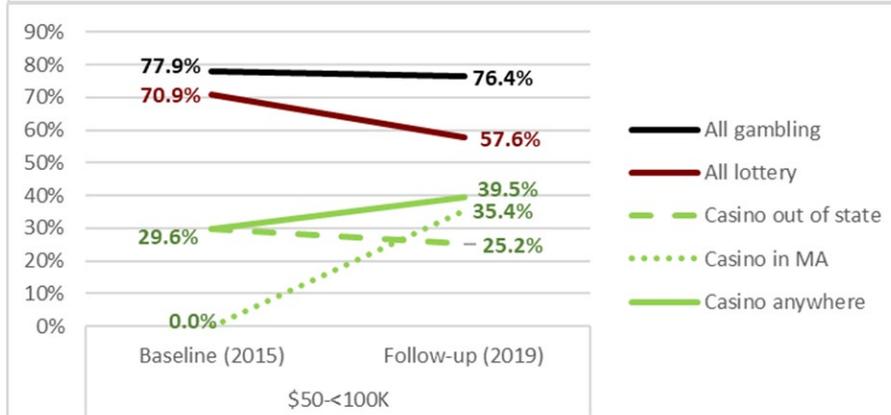
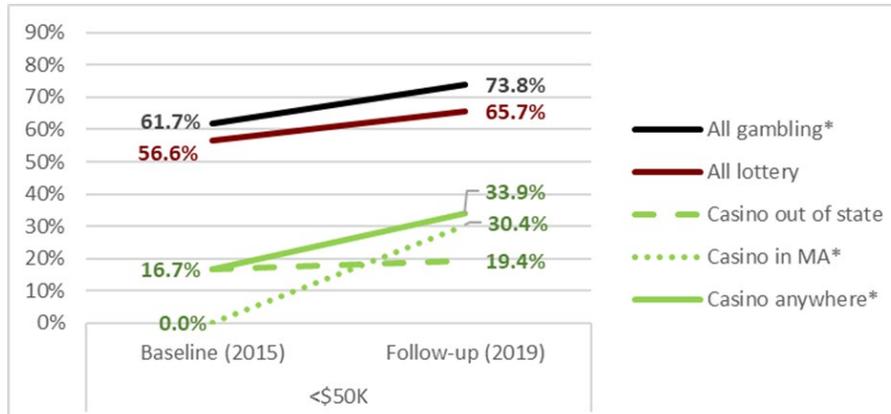
Gambling Participation by Demographics

- No significant changes by gender, except any casino gambling for males and females
- No significant changes by race/ethnicity, except any casino gambling for Blacks/Hispanics and Whites/Others
- No significant changes by age, except any casino gambling for those aged 50-64 and 65+

Gambling Participation by Education



Gambling Participation by Income

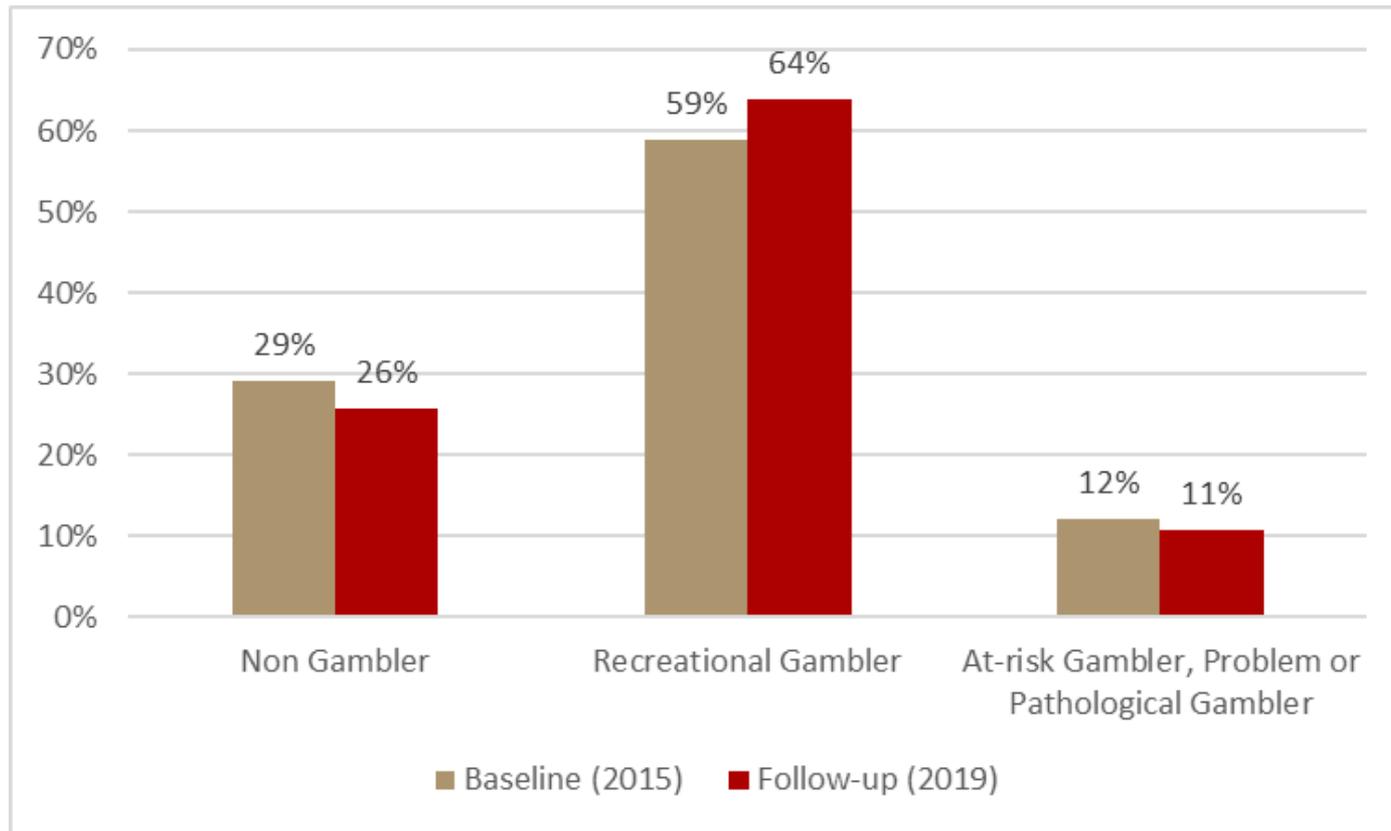


Key Informant Insights

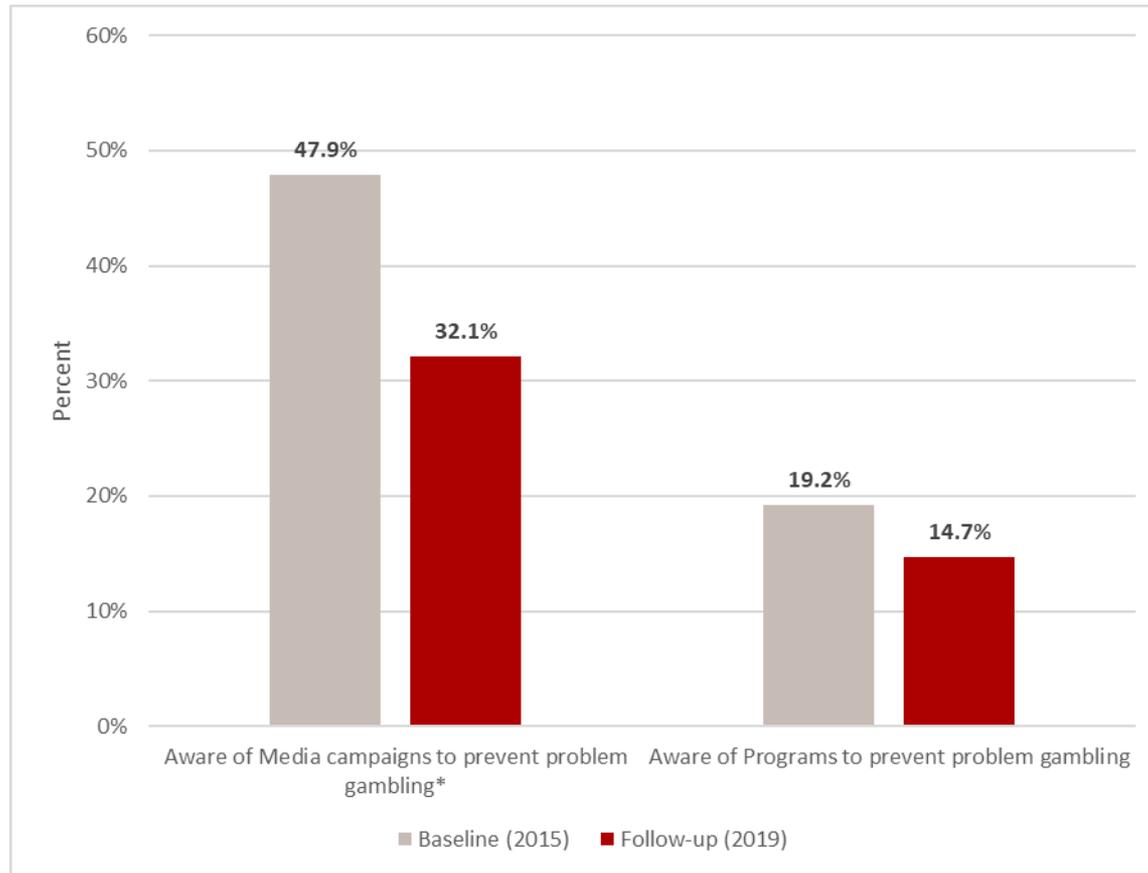
“I do talk to a lot of lower to middle income, often people of color, that aren’t necessarily having a gambling problem, but are gambling more than they were before... a lot of their reasoning is they are trying to better their situation in life. A story I heard, ‘I have tried everything in this life to move up, and gambling is my new American Dream. You talk to me about the odds on the slots... but it is just as good as me trying to pull myself up where I am in my situation and do anything legit. The odds aren’t that different.’ I have heard that story more than once.”

– Amy Gabrila, Senior GameSense Advisor at MGM Springfield,
Massachusetts Council on Compulsive Gambling

Problem Gambling



Awareness of PG Programs



Discussion

- Surveys in same jurisdiction at different times provide direct test of question of exposure versus adaptation
- Findings suggest that the Springfield population is far from naïve when it comes to casino gambling
- Surrounding states have had casinos for decades prior to introduction of casinos in MA
 - Lengthy exposure means harmful effects may have abated over time, even in a population that has experienced recent local expansion
- Population adaptation may have already occurred

Discussion

- Additional factors may have contributed to adaptation
 - Increase in public awareness through media or public health campaigns prior to opening of casino may have reduced involvement by individuals at risk
 - Expansion of treatment services may have contributed to increased rates of recovery, fewer relapses
 - Regulatory or industry measures to increase consumer safety (VSE, GameSense) may have prevented individuals at risk from progressing

Thank you!

Questions and Comments