

FACT SHEET

PROBLEM GAMBLING AND MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Information and Referral Pathways for Health, Justice and Community Services

This fact sheet is aimed at workers in mental health, drugs and alcohol, primary health care, justice and courts systems and community and human services. It highlights ways to identify and refer people who have a gambling problem or those who are affected by the gambling of others.

WHAT IS PROBLEM GAMBLING?

Problem gambling occurs when a person's gambling causes harm to themselves and/or to those around them such as a partner, family, friends, or others in the community. When gambling begins to consume more money and time than a person can afford it can affect many parts of their lives, including physical, mental and emotional health, finances, relationships, work and study.

PROBLEM GAMBLING AND MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Many people gamble as a way of dealing with difficulties in their lives. There are strong links between problem gambling and the following:

- depression
- anxiety
- suicidal thoughts
- heavy alcohol and drug use
- poor physical and emotional health
- violence

In South Australia around 18,000 people from all walks of life develop a problem with gambling which can result in any of the following issues: financial and emotional distress, relationship and family breakdown, trouble at work and/or crime.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

People with gambling problems may consult you about other health, social, financial or legal problems long before the effects of problem gambling become obvious. Feelings of denial, shame and guilt are common and often people will not seek help about gambling until they are in a crisis.

Don't assume gambling is not affecting your client. If your patient or client is presenting with symptoms of depression and anxiety, addictions or family, social and financial problems, asking these two questions can help in determining whether gambling may be a problem¹.

Have you ever had an issue with your gambling?

or

Has anyone in your family ever had an issue with gambling?

If your patient or client answered yes to one or both questions they may have a gambling problem.

There is help available for people that may have a gambling problem. Referral to a Gambling Help Service can provide free, confidential and professional help in a non-judgmental environment, including counselling and therapy for individuals, couples, family and friends.

GAMBLING HELP SERVICES

The Gambling Help Services provide free and confidential counselling, support and assistance for those experiencing a problem with their gambling, and for family and friends. Self-referral to a Gambling Help Service is also an option.

Gambling Help Services are located and available in every region in the state – metropolitan and country. There are also 'special purpose' services for specific population groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds and people in the criminal justice system. A specialist Gambling Help Service also offers inpatient and outpatient cognitive behavioural therapy.

What can the Gambling Help Services offer?

- Free, confidential and professional help in a non-judgmental environment
- Gambling counselling and therapy for individuals, couples, family and friends
- Financial counselling to help deal with debts and help to budget and manage credit issues
- Information and support
- Support groups (where available)
- Networking and community education

¹ Shane A Thomas, Leon Piterman and Alun C Jackson, "Problem gambling: what do general practitioners need to know and do about it?", MJA 2008.

REFERRAL PATHWAYS

Call the Gambling Helpline – 1800 858 858

The Gambling Helpline – 1800 858 858 - is free and available 24/7 to provide assistance with any gambling related issues and for referrals to a Gambling Help Service. The Gambling Helpline is staffed by trained counsellors who provide counselling, support and assistance. They can arrange a confidential appointment with a Gambling Help Service. They can also provide more information on the Problem Gambling Family Protection Orders Scheme (visit www.iga.sa.gov.au for more information). An interpreter can also be arranged for your patient or client if required.

or

Access the National Gambling Help Online - www.gamblinghelponline.org.au

For immediate online counselling, information and support, available 24/7.

or

Go to www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au

Visit the South Australian Problem Gambling website for information on problem gambling, where to find help, what kind of help is available, gambling and mental health, the odds of winning, assessment tools, free resource materials and more.

Other Useful Information and Resources

- General Practice Problem Gambling Resource Kit

Gambler Profiles:

- Low Risk Gamblers
- Non-Problem Gamblers
- Moderate to High Risk Problem Gamblers

Fact Sheets:

- Friends and Family
- Gambling and Mental Health
- What Is (Gambling) Counselling?
- The Pokies: The Odds
- The Pokies: Myths and Facts
- Problem Gambling and Mental Health aimed at Mental Health workers

These resources and more are available via www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au. Copies can be ordered free of charge using the Resource Order Form which can be downloaded here - <http://www.problemgambling.sa.gov.au/professionals/resources>

GAMBLING HELP SERVICES

Gambling Help Services provide FREE and confidential counselling and assistance

METROPOLITAN SERVICES

Eastern

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8223 4566 (Adelaide)

Northern

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8250 6600 (Salisbury, Elizabeth and Ridgehaven)

Southern

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8377 5400 (Oaklands Park including Noarlunga and Aldinga outreach)

Western

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8340 2022 (Port Adelaide)
Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

COUNTRY SERVICES

Adelaide Hills

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8223 4566 (Mount Barker outreach)

Barossa

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8250 6600 (Gawler and Nuriootpa outreach)
Tel: 1800 182 325 (Country Free Call)

Eyre and Western

- UnitingCare Wesley Country SA Tel: 1300 456 946 (Whyalla and Port Lincoln)

Far North

- UnitingCare Wesley Country SA Tel: 1300 456 946 (Port Augusta)

Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8377 5400 (Victor Harbor and Kingscote outreach)
Tel: 1800 182 325 (Country Free Call)

Limestone Coast

- Lifeline South East (SA) Tel: 08 8723 2299 (Mount Gambier)

Murray Mallee

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8582 4122 (Berri, including Waikerie, Loxton and Renmark outreach)
Tel: 08 8223 4566 (Murray Bridge outreach)
Tel: 1800 182 325 (Country Free Call)

Yorke and Mid North

- UnitingCare Wesley Country SA Tel: 1300 456 946 (Port Pirie and Kadina)

TARGETED SERVICES

Aboriginal Gambling Help Services

- Flinders University Tel: 08 8182 4911 (North/West Metro)
Tel: 08 8204 6982 (Southern Metro)
Tel: 08 8641 0907 (Port Augusta)
Tel: 08 8582 3192 (Berri)
Tel: 0418 499 649 (Murray Bridge)
Tel: 08 8683 1909 (Port Lincoln)
- Ceduna Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service Tel: 08 8626 2600 (Ceduna)

Aboriginal Gambling Therapy Service

- Southern Adelaide Local Health Network Tel: 08 8204 6982 (Adelaide)

Cambodian Gambling Help Service

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

Chinese Gambling Help Service

- Overseas Chinese Association Tel: 08 8445 1677 (Findon)

Vietnamese Gambling Help Service

- Community Access and Services SA Tel: 08 8447 8821 (Athol Park)

Multicultural Gambling Help Service

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

Criminal Justice Gambling Help Service

- Offenders Aid and Rehabilitation Service Tel: 08 8218 0700 (Adelaide)

Intensive Therapy Gambling Help Service

- SA State Intensive Gambling Help Service Tel: 08 8232 3333 (Metro/Country)

Lived Experience in Gambling Program

- Relationships Australia SA Tel: 08 8245 8100 (Hindmarsh)

Gambling Helpline

- For immediate help 24/7 free and confidential Tel: 1800 858 858

Gambling Help Online

- For 24/7 free online counselling www.gamblinghelponline.org.au

GAMBLING HELP ONLINE

Gambling Help Online provides 24/7 live and email counselling and support services (via chat or email). It's free, easy, convenient and available to anyone affected by gambling.

Visit www.gamblinghelponline.org.au for immediate and anonymous help.

Funded through
the Gamblers
Rehabilitation Fund



Government of South Australia
Department for Communities
and Social Inclusion

