A Critical Conversation on Responsible Gaming in Canada and Beyond

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Disclosures

- In the past 5 years, I have received funding from:
  - National Institutes of Health (NIH)
  - Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)
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  - Ontario Mental Health Foundation (OMHF)
  - Canadian Consortium for Gambling Research (CCGR)
  - Gambling Research Exchange Ontario (GREO)
Responsible Gambling (RG)

- Responsible Gambling (RG)
  - Policies and practices
  - To prevent and reduce potential harms associated with gambling
  - Diverse interventions to promote
    - Consumer protection
    - Community and consumer awareness and education
    - Community and consumer access to efficacious treatment

- Blaszczynski, Ladouceur, & Shaffer (2004, p. 308)
Responsible Gambling (RG)

- Blaszczynski, Ladouceur, & Shaffer, 2004
  - Reno Model provided key principles for RG policies
- Blaszczynski et al. (2011) outlined fundamental and minimal principles for RG programs
  - Communications
  - Employee training
  - Enforcement of underage play
  - Self-exclusion readily available
  - Modify environmental features contributing to excess play
Responsible Gambling Training: A Focused Example
Is RG Training Effective?

- Published/available research limited
- Restricted to VLT and casino employees
  
  - VLT
    - Ladouceur et al., 2004
    - Dufour et al., 2008
  
  - Casino
    - Giroux et al., 2008
    - Wong & Poon, 2011
    - LaPlante et al., 2012
Is RG Training Effective?

- Supports impact on knowledge, skills, and activities

Ladouceur et al., 2004; Dufour et al., 2008; Giroux et al., 2008; Wong & Poon, 2011; LaPlante et al., 2012
Is RG Training Effective?

- Numerous methodological strengths

Ladouceur et al., 2004; Dufour et al., 2008; Giroux et al., 2008; Wong & Poon, 2011; LaPlante et al., 2012
Is RG Training Effective?

- Important knowledge gaps
  - Impact of RG training on employee behaviors, player experience, problem gambling incidence
  - Impact of RG training on employee problem gambling
  - Links between RG training and culture of social responsibility, job satisfaction and performance
  - Relative impact, cost-effectiveness of RG training
  - Necessary format, trainer credentials
  - Necessary implementation procedures
Evidence for RG Training Content?

- How to identify players in need?
- Research supports a wide range of player behaviors to identify those in need, including:
  - Gambling frequency, duration, & expenditures;
  - Anger & depression;
  - Social behaviors, rudeness & hostility
- Evidence suggests that gaming venue employees can gauge gambling behaviors and harm
  - Combinations of indicators greater accuracy
  - More limited accuracy in categorizing players (presence/absence of problem gambling)

Delfabbro et al., 2007, 2012; Thomas et al., 2014
Evidence for RG Training Content?

- How to support players in need?
- Research suggests that players are not aware of the resources available, and may hold inaccurate beliefs about the nature of those resources (e.g., costs)
- Research supports the benefits of the most common resources available, namely:
  - Responsible gambling centres
  - Self-exclusion

Gainsbury et al., 2014; Gainsbury, 2014; Boutin et al., 2009
RG Training: Conclusions

- Published research for RG training programs
  - Many strengths
    - Content generally consistent with standards
    - General information as well as practical, scenario-based content appropriate to local need
  - Areas for future research:
    - Impact & utility
    - Implementation after training
    - Explicit delineation of roles & boundaries
      e.g., ↓ response to signs of moderate severity

see www.camh.ca/gamblingcare/mediaroom/Pages/default.aspx
RG Programming: Impact & Issues

PREVENTION OF PROBLEM GAMBLING: A Comprehensive Review of the Evidence and Identified Best Practices

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REPORT PREPARED FOR THE ONTARIO PROBLEM GAMBLING RESEARCH CENTRE AND THE ONTARIO MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG TERM CARE

October 1, 2012
RG Programming: Impact & Issues

Impact:

- Variable evidence for different RG programs
  - Education, self-exclusion, employee training
  - Limited evidence for impact on problem gambling incidence

- Disproportionate research regarding tertiary prevention, with a focus on gamblers, compared to primary prevention, with a focus on policy, structure

- Much research contained within internal reports or “grey literature” of varied/limited accessibility
RG Programming: Impact & Issues

Fair Game: Producing gambling research
The Goldsmiths Report
R. Cassidy, C. Loussouarn, A. Pissat
RG Programming: Current Issues

- **Issues:**

- Challenges to research & innovation

- Research funding availability
  - Decreases in government/charitable funds
  - Complete objectivity possibly by any funding source (Wohl & Wood, 2015)

- Transparency & autonomy
  - In other areas, industry funding associated with pro-industry outcomes (Babor & Miller, 2014)
  - Research funding, methods, and reporting
    - Clear statements re source, restrictions, etc.
RG Programming: Current Issues

- Issues:
- Applications
  - Increases in commercialization, private sector partnerships
RG Programming: Current Issues

- Issues:
- Applications
  - Increases in commercialization, private sector partnerships
RG Programming: Current Issues

- Issues:
- Sustainability
  - Partnerships necessary for culture change
A Critical Conversation

- Janine Robinson, M.Ed., CPGC, RP
  - Advanced Practice Clinician & Educator
  - Problem Gambling Institute of Ontario, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

- Garry Smith, Ph.D.
  - Professor
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