

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

PROBLEM
GAMBLING
SUPPORT
SERVICES
COMMITTEE

STRATEGIC PLAN
2017 - 2020

PROBLEM GAMBLING SUPPORT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Introduction

Gambling for most people is a form of entertainment that is enjoyed responsibly, however, for some people their gambling can lead to problems that may not only affect them individually, but also have an effect on their families and friends.

The signs of a problem usually involve people spending more time and money gambling than they would like to, or than they can afford. This situation doesn't normally occur overnight.

Problem gambling is characterised nationally by *“difficulties in limiting money and/or time spent on gambling which leads to adverse consequences for the gambler, their family or friends and for the community”*.

Background

The Problem Gambling Support Services Committee (PGSSC) was established under the auspices of the Gaming and Wagering Commission of Western Australia in 1995, to address issues associated with problem gambling in Western Australia.

The Committee's Mission Statement is:

To educate the community of Western Australia on the impact and consequences of problem gambling and to facilitate and promote the help services available for those people affected by gambling related harm.

The Committee consists of representatives from Crown Perth, Racing and Wagering Western Australia, Lotterywest, WA Bookmakers Association, Department of Local Government and Communities, and the Gaming and Wagering Commission of WA. The Committee is self-funded through voluntary contributions from representatives and is not reliant on an appropriation from Treasury. Executive support services are provided to the Committee by the Department of Racing, Gaming and Liquor.

Various services are funded by the Committee to address gambling related harm in Western Australia. These services include a 24-hour confidential telephone helpline, a face-to-face counseling service and an on-line counseling service.

STRATEGIC FOCUS

To enable the Problem Gambling Support Services Committee (PGSSC) to comply with its Mission Statement in educating the community on the effects of problem gambling and delivering effective help services, the Committee during the period 2017-2020 will implement the following objectives:

1. **Objective:** Provide Effective Gambling Help Services

Action: Work collaboratively with gambling help service providers to ensure all Western Australians who are experiencing gambling related harm have access to gambling help services.

2. **Objective:** Increase Awareness of the Impact of Excessive Gambling

Action: Continue to raise awareness throughout Western Australia of the effects of problem gambling via targeted media campaigns, the gambleaware website and social media.

3. **Objective:** Identify and Address Gaps in Service Delivery

Action: Work collaboratively with gambling help service providers and industry stakeholders to identify and address gaps in service delivery.

4. **Objective:** Maintain Contemporary Knowledge of Issues and Trends

Action: Keep the Committee informed of new research/policies to prevent and reduce harm caused by gambling.

5. **Objective:** Implement and Maintain Responsible Gambling Initiatives

Action: Key stakeholders to employ best practice initiatives in line with any applicable industry codes of practice. Those initiatives will be shared with the Committee.

ACTION PLAN

1. Provide Effective Gambling Help Services

Initiative: Provide a 24-hour telephone helpline service.

Actions:

- Review existing service to establish cost and service effectiveness.
- Current contract is in place for the provision of the service.
- Effectively manage the contract.
- Maintain a working relationship with the service provider.
- Obtain quarterly and annual statistical reports.

Outcomes:

Help is available for people affected by gambling by:

- Maintaining the continuity of the service to metropolitan, regional and remote Western Australians.
- Regular meetings are to be held between DRGL staff and the service provider.
- Reports provided to the PGSSC detailing all findings.

Initiative: Provide a face-to-face counseling service.

Actions:

- Review existing service to establish cost and service effectiveness.
- Current contract is in place for the provision of the service.
- Contract Manage.
- Maintain a working relationship with the service provider.
- Obtain annual statistical reports.

Outcomes:

Help is available for people affected by gambling by:

- Maintaining the continuity of the service to metropolitan and regional offices.
- Regular meetings are to be held between DRGL staff and the service provider.
- Reports provided to the PGSSC detailing all findings.

Initiative: Provide access to online counseling.

Actions:

- Contractual arrangements TBA
- Obtain statistical reports.

Outcomes:

Help is available for people affected by gambling by:

- Maintaining the continuity of an online counseling service across Western Australia.
- Regular meetings are to be held between DRGL staff and the service provider.
- Reports provided to the PGSSC detailing all findings.

2. Increase Awareness of the Impact of Excessive Gambling

Initiative: Develop and conduct a community awareness campaign.

Actions:

- Develop an awareness campaign capturing a broad audience through contemporary messages.
- Placement and timing of campaigns are to coincide with identified peak gambling periods.

Outcomes:

Material developed to be approved by the Committee with the campaign being conducted at various times throughout the year via a range of mediums to increase awareness of the availability of help services.

Initiative: Provide an online informative website.

Actions:

- Maintain the gambleaware trademark.
- Ongoing targeted awareness.
- Upload useful tools for gamblers, family and friends.
- Information kept up to date.

Outcomes:

A user friendly, mobile optimised website which increases awareness of the impacts of problem gambling and the help services available.

Initiative: Participate annually in Responsible Gambling Awareness Week.

Actions:

- Stakeholders to develop initiatives to promote responsible gambling practices and availability of help services.
- Promote activities/initiatives via the Gambleaware website.

Outcomes:

A range of initiatives implemented by stakeholders throughout Responsible Gambling Awareness Week raising awareness of harm caused from problem gambling.

3. Identify and Address Gaps in Service Delivery

Initiative: Consult service providers to identify gaps in service delivery.

Actions:

- Work collaboratively with service providers to identify gaps in service delivery.
- Evaluate proposals from service providers on proposed gaps in service delivery and recommend appropriate action to the Committee.

Outcomes:

Gaps in service identified and appropriate action endorsed by the Committee.

4. *Maintain Contemporary Knowledge of Issues and Trends*

Initiative: Keep informed of gambling research

Actions:

- Subscribe to Australian Gambling Research Centre and Gambling Research Australia.
- Maintain knowledge of jurisdictional research.
- Assess and disseminate completed research.
- Make recommendations on matters/initiatives that are of relevance to the Committee.

Outcomes:

Stakeholders are informed to make evidence-based decisions relating to responsible gambling within their industries.

5. *Implement and Maintain Responsible Gambling Initiatives*

Initiative: Stakeholders to implement and maintain responsible gambling initiatives.

Actions:

- Stakeholders to consider adopting best practice initiatives (for example, pre-commitment, self-exclusion, commitment to Responsible Gambling Awareness Week etc) detailed in research and/or demonstrated in other jurisdictions.
- Stakeholders to maintain contemporary codes of practice initiatives.

Outcome:

Responsible gambling initiatives implemented and maintained in respective services reducing harm caused by gambling.

Initiative: Share knowledge of responsible gambling initiatives employed by relevant stakeholders.

Action: Stakeholders to inform the Committee of new initiatives implemented.

Outcome:

The Committee is aware of successful responsible gambling initiatives undertaken throughout the WA gambling industry.