


How to Reduce Gambling Harms in General Practice



Helping People Experiencing
Gambling Harms to Find
a Path to Recovery

Book an Appointment
(08) 8232 2424

For More Information & Resources Visit
www.psychmed.com.au

Five Simple Steps to Reduce Gambling Harms



More information about PsychMed's
free and confidential SA Intensive Gambling
Help Service is available at www.psychmed.com.au.

Gambling can be a hidden cause of many of the symptoms and problems encountered regularly in general practice. Many people experiencing gambling related harms are unaware that health problems such as headaches, anxiety, depression, or poor sleep may be related to out of control gambling. Consequently, they are unlikely to seek help until their gambling has created a crisis.

Some red flags that may suggest someone is struggling with gambling:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Suicidal ideation
- Relationship problems
- Work / study problems
- Financial problems
- Withdrawn
- AOD Issues
- Past trauma / grief
- Domestic Violence

75%

Express significant
suicide ideation.

Of people experiencing
gambling related harms
meet criteria for major
depressive disorder.

40%

1

Start the conversation

- How do you like to spend your free time?
- Do you engage in risky activities (e.g. drinking, drug taking, gambling?)
- Have you ever had an issue with your gambling? (Once established they gamble)
- Has anyone in your family ever had an issue with gambling?

When gambling issues are identified:

- Clients can be distressed and experience considerable shame and guilt.
- Acknowledge the courage it took for the client to disclose.
- Normalise and validate client's responses.

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3

Provide hope for recovery

- Discuss how treatments are effective for people to manage or overcome gambling problems.

Help the client break the gambling cycle and minimise gambling harms

For example, encourage clients to consider:

- Seeking support from someone they can trust.
- Reducing access to cash money, credit cards, and ensuring savings are not accessible.
- Predicting and avoiding triggering situations.
- Not to act on urges; reassure them the urge will pass and the desire to gamble will subside.
- Engaging in behavioural activation. For example; gardening, walking, or watching a movie.
- Rest, relaxation, and respite.

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Referral for professional gambling treatment

SA Intensive Gambling Help Service is a free and confidential service delivered by PsychMed and funded by the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund. To date, it has shown success in helping individuals struggling with both land-based and online gambling to regain control of their lives and treat comorbid disorders, such as alcohol and other drug issues, suicidal ideation, trauma, depression, and anxiety.

- Psychometric data and client qualitative self-reports indicate that, in line with best practice, PsychMed's combination of psychoeducation, cognitive behaviour therapy, and simple strategies help individuals understand and change their problematic behaviour.
- Clients are seen by a qualified practitioner within 72 hours of referral.