

Responsible Service of Gaming - Staff Tips

Responsibilities. Everybody has a role to play

Gambling involves many players – gamblers, venue operators, government regulators and communities. Each has their own responsibilities.

Venue operators are responsible for:

- providing gambling entertainment in a pleasant, safe and secure environment
- staff commitment to the principles of responsible gambling
- commitment to both industry codes of practice and legislative requirements
- setting responsible gambling house policy.

Venue staff are often the first to be in contact with a person having difficulties with gambling and can provide initial support and information.

Common characteristics of a person with a gambling problem

There is no complete list of characteristics which can be used to identify a person with gambling problems. However there are some behavioural traits which are common:

- intolerance of losing, e.g. aggression, distress
- chasing losses and the inability to stop when losing
- increasing amounts of time and money spent at the venue
- forming an attachment to a machine
- denial of a problem
- being secretive about gambling
- claiming to win when actually losing
- remembering the wins rather than the mounting losses
- restless or irritable if unable to gamble

Provision of cash for gaming

Provision of cash through EFTPOS outlets in venues can be harmful to patrons having difficulty in controlling their gambling.

Cash may only be provided through an EFTPOS transaction if the licence holder or staff member is reasonably satisfied that the patron is not experiencing difficulties controlling his or her gambling. Only one EFTPOS transaction per person is allowed per day.

Cashing of cheques at venues can also be harmful to patrons with gambling problems. The law says that no cheques are to be cashed when the cash is intended for use on EGMs.

Services available to people with gambling problems and their families and friends

- Gambling Helpline (free call 24 hours) 1800 000 973
- Break Even Gambling Support Services.
Anglicare
North West (03) 6424 8581, North (03) 6334 6060, South (03) 6234 3510

GABA (Gambling and Betting Addiction) Incorporated

North 1800 676 565, South 1800 802 834.

Relationship Australia (RA)

North West 1800 002 222, North (03) 6336 7000, South (03) 6211 4050

- Doctors & mental health practitioners
- Exclusion Scheme – See *Need to take a break from gambling?* brochure.

For more information on Responsible Service of Gaming contact the Liquor and Gaming Branch of the Department of Treasury and Finance—Phone 6233 2475.

How to help

There are several factors which may have contributed to an excessive gambling problem: family breakdown, loneliness, psychological disorders and depression. However every person is different and care and sensitivity are very important when working with people experiencing a gambling problem.

Hospitality employees are not trained or expected to counsel people with gambling problems.

The main role of venue staff is to provide information about the support services and to direct people to them. If an employee identifies a person with gambling problems he/she should pass this information on to a manager or shift supervisor.

Do not approach a person who gambles unless invited by that person or if the person is obviously distressed and in need of assistance. Offer help in a discreet manner. Remember that the Gambling Helpline is available 24 hours a day, with trained professionals who can support people in crisis.

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