Introducing South Africa’s public/private partnership in responsible gambling

THE NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PROGRAMME
The South African Responsible Gambling Foundation (following the findings of the best international and national research) recognises that with respect to gambling, South Africans fall into one of the following categories:

- Those who don’t gamble at all on any form of gambling, including the lottery.
  This group was estimated to constitute about half* the South African population in 2009.
- Recreational gamblers, for whom gambling is a harmless recreation and who do not spend more time or money on gambling than they can comfortably afford. This group was estimated to constitute about 47%* of the SA population and frequency of gambling varies widely.
- People who, with varying degrees of frequency, gamble more than they can afford to and run the risk that their gambling may cause significant problems in their lives. This group constitutes around 2.5%* of the SA population.
- People for whom gambling is an addiction which they cannot easily control and who, like other addicts, often do significant harm to themselves and others. Such people are also known as “compulsive” (because they cannot control their gambling) and “pathological” gamblers (because they are seen as suffering from a psychological disorder or disease). This group constitutes about 0.5% of the SA population.*

* Source of Estimates: The NRGP’s 2010 Prevalence Report and the NGB’s Socio-Economic Impact Report. Although these figures are calculated using the best available internationally recognised methodology, this methodology is itself recognised as yielding only approximations.*
WHAT IS THE NATIONAL RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING PROGRAMME?

The National Responsible Gambling Programme (NRGP) is a set of activities that integrates treatment and counselling, public awareness, education, training and research.

It was specifically devised to address the challenges posed for South Africa as a developing nation after the legalisation of the gambling industry in mid-1996.

It was the first programme of its kind internationally to integrate these components and it still is the only programme of its sort to be jointly controlled by a public/private sector partnership, involving government regulators and the gambling industry executives under the leadership of an independent Chairperson.

WHEN DID THE NRGP START?

The NRGP was officially launched in June 2000. What started out as a collection of in-house industry programmes is today an integrated, national, private/public sector partnership addressing the issue of problem gambling in all its aspects and in all its forms.
It is maximally cost-effective to have a single, national programme covering all forms of gambling. It was also judged important that the education, treatment, counselling and research functions be integrated and organised coherently.

**WHO MANAGES THE NRGP?**

The NRGP is managed by the South African Responsible Gambling Foundation (SARGF).

**WHAT IS THE **SA RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING** FOUNDATION?**

The South African Responsible Gambling Foundation is a not-for-profit, Section 21 company.

The principal function of the SA Responsible Gambling Foundation is to ensure that everything which reasonably can be done to minimise the harm caused by problem gambling is, in fact, done.

The Board of the Foundation has an equal number of regulators and industry professionals together with its independent chairperson.

The executive director is now a full member of the Board and there is provision for adding additional members to the board as deemed necessary.
ACCOUNTABILITY

Central to the philosophy of the NRGP is the principle that, while being funded by the private and public sectors, its operation and management are independent.

Although it is primarily accountable to its Board of directors, it is also responsible to the public and reports to government regulators as well as directly to Provincial and National Governments. There is a high degree of accountability and transparency in terms of financial management, and reports on the NRGP’s activities are published regularly and can also be found on the website www.responsiblegambling.co.za.

WHO FUNDS THE PROGRAMME?

All gambling companies in South Africa – including the casino, racing, bingo and limited payout machine (LPM) industries, but excluding the national lottery – contribute towards funding the National Responsible Gambling Programme (NRGP).

The contribution by the private sector is a voluntary contribution of 0.1% of Gross Gaming Revenue (GGR = money staked less money paid out in winnings). This currently amounts to just over R15m per annum.

In addition, the NRGP receives public grants for special projects. Various provincial NRGP initiatives have been funded by the Department of Social Development in the Western Cape (since 2002), the Gauteng Gambling Board and the Department of Economic Development in the Gauteng Provincial Government (since 2004), as well as the Mpumalanga Gambling Board (since 2009).
Prevention

Prevention of problem gambling is the main thrust of the NRGP. This means, in addition to treating people with gambling problems, also seeking to ensure that those who may gamble will be able to make fully informed consumer choices by having a good understanding of the dangers involved in gambling and how to avoid them.

To this end the NRGP runs a public advocacy campaign to educate gamblers and potential gamblers about responsible gambling. This involves interaction with interested stakeholders NGOs, government departments, the medical community, schools, church groups, community structures, etc to inform them about the programme, and a community outreach component, which specifically educates people about the counselling line and treatment options.

Brochures, posters and other collateral material have been produced in significant quantities and distributed to these stakeholders. Extensive point-of-contact collateral including posters, stickers, brochures and signage are made available in places where gambling takes place.
Additional publications, ranging from treatment protocols to advisory leaflets, have been prepared for interested parties, including a wide variety of NGOs, medical professionals and educationists.

A major facet of the broader public education programme has been an external advocacy campaign in the media, both printed and electronic.

This has involved the production and regular placement of public service advertorials nationally in newspapers and magazines, as well as a focused campaign in local editorial columns and on actuality programmes.

Importantly, all advertisements placed in the print and electronic media by gambling companies contain a short cautionary message and the NRGP’s free telephone counselling number.
The NRGP's National Schools Programme was originally initiated in order to ensure compliance with the provision of national gambling legislation which requires that all school learners be taught about the risks of gambling and how to avoid them in the same way that they are taught about the risks of drugs, alcohol and unprotected sex.

In the hope that education can play a role in curbing the incidence of problem gambling among adolescents and unemployed recent school-leavers, the National Responsible Gambling Programme commissioned a 15-lesson school curriculum, *Taking Risks Wisely*, aimed at 13-16 year olds.

The curriculum has been piloted in five South African provinces, and has involved 53 schools, 179 teachers and some 1 776 learners to date.

The first phase is aimed at grades 7 to 9 (13 to 15 year-olds), at the age when adolescents start exploring various forms of high-risk behaviour, coupled with the need for greater independence in decision-making relating to how they spend their leisure time.
The aim is to make the teacher's task easier, providing clear scripting and material for lessons, transparencies, learning activity sheets and answer sheets, as well as a comic book and a CD ROM which will eventually be available for wider accessibility on the Internet.

A further intention is to develop appropriate resources for use by youth groups (up to the age of 35) in which the enhancement of skills in sound decision-making with regards to high-risk behaviour and skills of responsible money management will be central.

Long-term plans include adapting the schools and youth group materials on responsible gambling for face-to-face as well as distance education use by other groups such as adult education facilitators, social workers, and correctional service counsellors.

By including responsible gambling as part of the lifeskills orientation syllabus, the concept of risk-taking behaviour is highlighted. Even though the percentage of youth involved in problem gambling behaviour is relatively small, the same risk-taking elements are common to alcohol and drug abuse and unsafe sex practices.

Grades 10-12 will build on the material and content of the first phase and start to introduce money management skills.

The teaching and learning resource package has been developed within the legislated structure and prescribed requirements of the SA Revised National Curriculum Statement and the Outcomes Based Education (OBE) framework.

There are also expected to be important incidental educational benefits associated with this programme, including improving learners' understanding of mathematical probabilities, their money management skills and their critical reasoning abilities.
The NRGP Training Division is responsible for the design and implementation of learning programmes through seminars, workshops, and conferences.

Training has been directed at the following industry sectors: slot route (LPM) operators, the horse racing, bingo and casino industry; regulators, healthcare workers in the Western Cape; HR managers and employees in Gauteng.

The NRGP also focuses on broadening the skills of facilitators and staff on the counselling line, many of them former school teachers or honours and masters students in the education, social work, medical, clinical psychology or psychiatric disciplines.

There is no one size fits all in terms of training, and that is why specially tailored courses are developed for the different sectors, provincial regulators and health care workers.

- NRGP Basic Course, an introductory course to be attended by all levels of employees
- NRGP Advanced Course, based on the principles of Motivational Interviewing, for managers and supervisors only
- The Train-the-Trainer Course, to facilitate in-house training
- Regulator training, intended for staff at the National and Provincial Racing and Gambling Boards

NRGP courses are aligned to a unit standard, and the NRGP has started the process of becoming an accredited service provider registered with THETA (the sectoral Tourism, Hospitality, Sport Education and Training Authority).

Despite work shifts complicating logistics, and the different training levels prevailing at different gambling venues, the total number of people trained from inception up to and including February 2010 is 22 733.
The NRGP offers a problem gambling counselling line service from its headquarters in Cape Town, as well as a network of about 72 treatment professionals in 53 towns and suburbs throughout the country and beyond its borders providing outpatient treatment free of charge.

The NRGP has developed a unique treatment protocol customised for southern African problem gamblers. It consists of a six-session treatment programme by qualified treatment professionals throughout the country. It aims to meet the therapeutic needs of problem gamblers wanting help and insight into their behaviour. It also enables therapists to make a significant difference within a limited period of time.

Subsidised inpatient treatment is currently available at five clinics – in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Bloemfontein, Durban and East London.

Since 2003 a Family counselling programme (three sessions) is available to family members. This counselling is designed to assist family members affected by problem gamblers on how to handle an intervention and deal with the problem gambler.

There is also a Continuing Care programme for problem gamblers who have completed the NRGP’s six-session treatment programme and require ongoing support in group therapy sessions.

Another element of the service is debt management counselling which is provided for patients in treatment, if required.

Treatment Professionals have been trained countrywide, to provide outpatient treatment in eight of the country’s official languages.

In severe cases, meeting well-defined clinical criteria, the NRGP will subsidise inpatient treatment at five identified clinics around the country. These criteria include strong suicidal tendencies, other concurrent addictive disorders and gambling activity that is hopelessly out of control, with the risk of criminal behaviour.

On average two inpatients per month are admitted for treatment.

Ongoing statistical monitoring of the service is of the utmost importance and treatment professionals maintain accurate statistical data in this regard.
TREATMENT CENTRES

OUTPATIENT TREATMENT CENTRES

INPATIENT TREATMENT CENTRES

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OUTPATIENT TREATMENT CENTRES

WESTERN CAPE
Cape Town
Tygerberg
Bellville
Goodwood
Parow/Vasco
Helderberg
Strand
Somerset West
Oostenberg
Kuils River
Southern Suburbs
Kenilworth
Rondebosch
Cape Flats
Mitchells Plain
Southern Cape
George
Mossel Bay
Overberg
Caledon
Breederivier Valley
Worcester

West Coast
Saldanha

FREE STATE
Bloemfontein
Welkom
Bethlehem

NORTHERN CAPE
Kimberley
Upington

EASTERN CAPE
Butterworth
East London
Grahamstown
Mthatha
Port Elizabeth
Queenstown

MPUMALANGA
Hazyview
Nelspruit
Secunda
Witbank

NORTH-WEST
Klerksdorp
Mafikeng
Mmabatho
Rustenburg

PRETORIA
Hatfield
Centurion

East Rand
Alberton
Benoni
Boksburg
Brakpan
Germiston
Kempton Park
Springs

West Rand
Krugersdorp
Roodepoort

SWAZILAND
Manzini

LESOTHO
Maseru

NAMIBIA
Swakopmund
Windhoek

INPATIENT TREATMENT CENTRES

WESTERN CAPE
Cape Town: Kenilworth Clinic Addiction Treatment Centre

GAUTENG
Johannesburg: Elim Clinic

FREE STATE
Bloemfontein: Aurora Treatment Centre

KWAZULU-NATAL
Durban: Lulama Treatment Centre

EASTERN CAPE
East London: Ikhwezi Neuro Clinic
The NRGP’s counselling line is managed from the NRGP headquarters in Cape Town. It provides an effective entry point into the NRGP’s provincial and national treatment network.

The counselling line team provides a 24-hour seven-day service, offering free, confidential and expert help from counsellors specially trained to deal with gambling problems and who can speak to South Africans from South Africa’s different cultural communities in the language of their choice. The counselling line also has an international number, allowing access from neighbouring states.

This service has established itself as a reputable resource within the treatment community.

The Integrated Care Programme (ICP) is a further service to the problem gambler that was instituted in January 2009. This call-back service starts three months after the initial referral of the gambler to a Treatment Professional through the Counselling Line. It provides the gambler in recovery further support after treatment and any relapsed gamblers can be reintegrated into the treatment system.

The ICP calls take place three, six, 12, 18 and 24 months after the initial call to the Counselling Line.
WHAT KIND OF HELP IS AVAILABLE VIA THE COUNSELLING LINE?

Call Our Counselling line – 0800 006 008

• Information about the service to would-be referrals and referrants
• Telephonic counselling for problem gamblers when referral for treatment is not required or requested
• Referrals of problem gamblers to the Treatment Network are facilitated when indicated
• Dealing with crisis calls, hoax callers and non-problem gambling calls in a positive manner.
STATISTICS ON PROBLEM GAMBLING CALLS

• Per Province: Gauteng 49%, Western Cape 18%, KwaZulu-Natal 15%, Eastern Cape 7%, Free State 3%, Mpumalanga 3%, Other provinces 4% and areas outside the Republic less than 1%

• 59% of callers were male and 40% were female.

• 56% of callers were married; 28% single and 11% divorced, 3% widowed and 2% separated

• 62% of callers were employed; 14% unemployed; 13% self employed; 3% on pension

• 54% of callers ascribed their problem to playing slot machines and 20% to table games. Of the balance, horse racing (3%) and the lottery (less than 1%) featured most prominently; 15% listed more than one type of gambling and 1% Internet gambling

• About 44% of problem gambling calls received have been referred for treatment, although a further 48% of calls were people requesting information, and 8% from people who were successfully helped on the telephone by the counsellor taking the call.

• Indicative of the success of the NRGP’s public affairs and education initiatives, on average 40% of callers obtained information on the programme through press coverage or public service advertising

• Some 46% of callers obtained information about the NRGP via collateral or staff in gambling venues.

Source: NRGP Annual Report 2009
The Research Team is led by Professor Don Ross, of the University of Cape Town, under the general direction of the Executive Director, Professor Peter Collins, and with members located at six other universities in South Africa, the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. During the past three years, a team of up to 20 researchers have participated in varied activities supported by the NRGP.

The objective of the Research work carried out by the NRGP is to understand the nature, causes and prevalence of problem gambling so as to facilitate the development of good public policy and to enhance the effectiveness of prevention and treatment strategies.

The NRGP supports very high quality research which focuses on the particular circumstances of South Africa and especially its less advantaged communities. This research combines pioneering work carried out in South Africa with the application of cutting edge international research to South African circumstances.

Research projects include regular studies (four since 2001) of rates of participation in different forms of gambling and the prevalence of problem gambling in South Africa.

Studies are also underway which focus on the relationships between poverty and ignorance and problem gambling as well as on the behaviours which distinguish the majority of gamblers who never get into trouble with gambling too much from the few who do.

The NRGP has been responsible for the four main national prevalence surveys into gambling and problem gambling in South Africa carried out in 2001, 2002-03 and 2005-6 and 2009, with the requisite international peer review, as well as a number of separate research projects, including studies such as a recent international investigation into self-exclusion policies and the implications of Interactive Gambling.
1 The National Prevalence Survey: This is the fourth such study since the inception of the NRGP in 2000. It is the most comprehensive national survey ever done of gambling behaviour in a developing country. A first Report comparing 2008 results with the results published in 2005 and earlier was published in 2009 and a fuller report containing new data on the relation of problem gambling both to individual forms of gambling and to other psychological disorders is now complete. A longitudinal (panel) study of problem gamblers: Starting in 2009, and extending into 2010, the research team is conducting a longitudinal study that will look into the causes of changes in severity of individuals’ problem gambling. This is a question that has not previously been scientifically studied. It is easier to gain this knowledge in South Africa than in northern countries because of the more rapid economic and social fluctuations here.

2 The poverty and gambling study: In early 2009, data on the relationship between poverty and gambling was gathered from a peri-urban community in KwaZulu-Natal. This is an opportunity to investigate the truth of anecdotes that suggest unusually high rates of purchase of lottery tickets among poorer South Africans. We will soon have the evidence to prove or disprove this assertion one way or the other.
Studies in cognition and gambling using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI): This study includes investigation of the way in which the brain compares present and future rewards using functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI). This is a key method for testing an important new insight into problem gambling that has come to the fore. The group of problem gamblers is made up of two different kinds of people. It includes a small proportion truly addicted to gambling, in a way that can be observed in their brains and, in time, perhaps controlled by medication. It also includes a larger group whose problems are less serious, come and go over the person’s lifetime, and are subject to self-control. Establishing the scientific basis of this distinction will play a major role in moving to optimal policy for reduction of problem gambling.

The publication of the monthly electronic newsletter, Responsible Gambling Digest – a broad overview of international developments in the study and treatment of problem gambling.

In South Africa, no-one aged under 18 is allowed to gamble. However, a 2004 survey, A Profile of Youth Gambling in South Africa, conducted by the University of Witwatersrand on behalf of the National Gambling Board, confirmed for South Africa what has been found in other jurisdictions in relation to gambling. This is that a fairly large number of young people do gamble mostly amongst themselves on informal games and that young people are more likely to show symptoms of gambling problematically than adults. This is similar to what is known about young people and indulging in risky pleasures generally, i.e. that during adolescence the propensity to take risks of all sorts is exceptionally high, partly because the mechanisms for self-control within the brain are not fully developed. This is why the NRGP’s programme for schools focuses on risk-taking generally rather than simply on gambling. It also introduces them to issues of debt and money management, as when people gamble excessively the substance being abused is money.
Stable Number of Problem Gamblers
Finally, the number of problem gamblers in South Africa has remained more or less stable since 2001. This is in conformity with findings from other jurisdictions where responsible gambling programmes are operative and suggests that, with good regulation and the kind of programme we offer, it is possible to keep the number of people who get into trouble with excessive gambling small, especially as compared with other problems such as substance abuse or excessive consumer indebtedness.

Reputation
The South African National Responsible Gambling Programme is very well thought of internationally and the Foundation’s executive director is regularly asked to address international conferences and to advise governments on responsible gambling issues.

EVALUATION

Testament to Training
Although it is very difficult to measure scientifically how effective our work is in terms of altering behaviour, the NRGP’s training programme has been independently evaluated, together with all other aspects of the NRGP’s work, by Professor Robert Ladouceur of the University of Laval in Quebec – one of the world’s leading authorities in this field (his report is available on the website www.responsiblegambling.co.za) whose comments about the programme were favourable. In addition, quarterly and annual statistics are maintained on the number of staff trained (gambling/hospitality/concessionaire) and the courses carried out by the NRGP.
Apart from an increase in problem gambling amongst lottery-only players between 2001 and 2003, the number of problem gamblers in the South African population has remained remarkably stable. This initially surprising statistic is confirmed by studies in other jurisdictions including New Zealand, the UK and individual states in the USA. This may reflect the fact that people disposed to gamble to excess tend to do so illegally when they cannot do so legally and therefore problem gambling rates may decline rather than increase after legalisation if appropriate measures are put in place to address this problem when legalisation takes place. This seems to be what happened in South Africa which used to have a huge illegal slot machine industry before legalisation and the establishment of legal casinos.

More than 22 000 industry employees, staff from provincial regulators, and public servants have attended courses on problem and compulsive gambling by the NRGP’s Training Division since inception.

Over R91-million has been invested in the responsible gambling programme by the private sector up to February 2010.

Since inception 273 950 calls have been received by the tollfree Counselling Line (0800 006 008) and 10 234 callers referred for free treatment by a medical professional, on average 97 per month.

More than 3 085 have received assistance telephonically from the multilingual team that operates 24 hours a day and seven days a week.

The multilingual NRGP Treatment Network, comprising 72 Treatment Professionals, has been extended to 53 towns and cities in southern Africa (comprising 68 TPs in 49 South African towns and four TPs in four towns in three neighbouring countries, Namibia, Swaziland and Lesotho).

The www.responsiblegambling.co.za website enjoys up to 1000 hits monthly.

Since inception of the AllPay community outreach initiative in the Western Cape in 2004, some 1116 paypoints in 30 districts were visited, reaching an estimated 116 000 recipients of social grants and/or old age pensions.

Since inception of the AllPay community outreach initiative in Gauteng during 2006 some 671 of the paypoints in the metropole were visited, reaching an estimated 224 125 beneficiaries of social grants and/or old age pensions.

Since 2002, some 68 000 learners at 197 high schools in the Western Cape and since 2004 more than 136 000 learners at 231 high schools in Gauteng have participated in an innovative edutainment programme promoting awareness of problem gambling among youth. A projected 10 000 learners in Mpumalanga are being targeted during 2010.
WARNING SIGNS OF PROBLEM GAMBLING

- Spending more time or money on gambling than was intended
- Borrowing or stealing money to fund gambling
- Missing work or school or other commitments to gamble
- Gambling more and more to recover your losses (this is called ‘chasing’)
- Feeling worried, anxious and moody when you are not gambling
- Family relationships breaking down because of debt and dishonesty
- Hiding your gambling from others, but unable to stop gambling
- Gambling with ever bigger amounts to reach the desired level of excitement (the ‘high’)

Winners know when to stop
FOR PROBLEM GAMBLING
COUNSELLING PHONE 0800 006 008

e-mail: counsellor@responsiblegambling.co.za
Multilingual
National Counselling Line
0800 006 008
Open to all 24 hours a day, 7 days a week tollfree

Postal address:
PO Box 16331 Vlaeberg 8018

Telephone:
International: +27 21 674 5830
(office hours only; standard telephone rates apply)

Confidential e-mail:
counsellor@responsiblegambling.co.za

General information:
info@responsiblegambling.co.za

Website:
www.responsiblegambling.co.za

NRGP Office:
Tel: +27 21 674 5926
Fax: +27 21 674 5832

Executive Director:
Professor Peter Collins
Cell: +27 83 625 6155
Email: execdir@responsiblegambling.co.za
Fax: +27 86 604 6522