



## HELP SHEET

### IS GAMBLING AFFECTING YOUR LIFE?

Gambling for many people is a recreational activity, but for an increasing number of both individuals and families, gambling can become a problem.

#### Why is this so?

Well as we increase our access to games of chance there is an increasing likelihood that some people may become involved with gambling behaviour that eventually develops habits similar to an addiction. The difficulty is that we don't know who may develop this habit and who won't. What we do know, is that for some people (like many other health problems) the behaviour starts in a small way and then grows to the point where it is out of control. The important thing is that help is available for individuals who are experiencing gambling difficulties and their family/friends.

#### FIRST SIGNS

People often don't realise they are developing a problem for some time and when they do, they may hide their concerns from their family or friends. Sometimes it may be the family or friends who may notice changes earlier than the person who is experiencing difficulties. Common signs of gambling becoming a problem include:

- Increasing amount of time or money spent gambling.

- Going back another day to try to reclaim losses (chasing).
- Borrowing money from family or friends to cover gambling related debts.
- Borrowing money to gamble.
- Increasing mood changes.
- Irritable behaviour, including highs when gambling and lows when leaving gambling.
- Gambling to escape uncomfortable feelings or situations (chilling out).



#### For family members or friends:

- Unexplained debts.
- Changes in mood.
- Partner/friend being withdrawn or elusive.



## Gambling Impact Society (NSW) Inc.

- Increasing stress in personal relationships and family relationships.
- Lack of money to meet household responsibilities.
- Arguments about money.
- **FIRST STEPS TO CHANGE?**

Acknowledging the problem and getting help are often the first, but sometimes the hardest, steps to take. People often feel concerned about seeking help, but it's important to know that like many other health problems, difficulties with gambling can be successfully treated. Help is available for both the person who is experiencing gambling difficulties and their family and friends who may also be concerned and/or dealing with the negative impacts of gambling on their own lives.

### Getting Help

**G-Line : 1800 633 635** is a 24 hour telephone information counselling and referral service for anyone affected by gambling problems. It is funded by the Casino Community Benefit Trust (a section of the Department of Gaming & Racing). The service provides crisis

and telephone counselling and is able to advise you about support services in your local area.

### Gambling Impact Society(NSW)Inc

is a community education, information, advocacy and support service. It is a not – for profit voluntary organisation established in July 2000 by people who had been directly affected by problem gambling. It managed by a team of people drawn from both the consumer, welfare and the health service sector and has a community development orientation. The Society publishes a quarterly Newsletter - Impact News and has a website with self-help information including a list of all free gambling specific counselling services across NSW. [www.gisnsw.org.au](http://www.gisnsw.org.au).  
For more information Tel: 02 44 215077

