



Gambling and the Canadian Criminal Justice System

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AGENDA

- ◆ Development and Implementation of Gambling Program for Incarcerated Problem Gamblers
- ◆ Unique Challenges providing programs for this population
- ◆ Overview of Crime and the relationship to Gambling
- ◆ Treating the Problem gambling Offender

Kingston, Ontario

Kingston has 8 Federal Institutions that house male offenders. These individuals are serving 2 years +. Dependant on a number of variables the offender is assigned to an Institution that meets their risk level. ie Maximum, Medium Minimum levels of security.



◆ How We Began

- ◆ The Agency received a call from a Programs Officer working out of Frontenac Institution.
- ◆ They had an Offender who was back inside on a parole violation.
- ◆ He had picked up new charges for money generating crimes. (fraud)
- ◆ This was his 3rd Federal bit for related offences
- ◆ We consulted with the Institution and the Program evolved.





Gambling program inside and out

- ◆ Initial assessment at FI and treatment plan developed and follow up appointments.
- ◆ When eligible Offenders applied for ETA's and UTA's to be able to attend office.(CA completed)



Gambling Training: Staff

Developed and implemented training for CSC Staff – in attendance where :

The Warden's, Parole Officers, Programs Officers. Psychology

With most attention towards the Parole Officers ie case reviews, asking the question



Gambling Training: Clients

- ◆ Set up a number of information sessions
- ◆ Posters on ranges, common areas school
- ◆ Tele-don



Challenges delivering program

- ◆ Buy in from Correctional Staff and Inmates
- ◆ Restricted movement in the jail
- ◆ Lock downs
- ◆ Weekend routines during the week
- ◆ Class rooms being double booked
- ◆ Social program
- ◆ Lack of awareness of criminal behavior related to gambling
- ◆ Passes not going out

Difficulties in Identifying Criminal behaviours are related to gambling.

- ◆ Not everyone charged with a gambling-related crime will admit that it was due to gambling
- ◆ There may be limited evidence that charges are gambling related.
- ◆ Official records seldom specify a gambling connection. ie court documents, police reports, Correctional plans etc.





Crime and Gambling

- ◆ Gambling crime can be divided into four categories:
- ◆ Illegal Gambling
- ◆ Crimes committed to support a gambling habit
- ◆ Crimes that occur around gambling locations
- ◆ And Family abuse. Predominately monetary vs violent crimes



Crime and Gambling cont'd

- ◆ Types of crime include theft, robbery, forgery, embezzlement, fraud, credit card scams, domestic violence, assault, child neglect, prostitution, loan sharking, money laundering, breaking and entering, home invasion and drug dealing.
- ◆ In most desperate phase of compulsive gambling, they may do anything to gamble.



Contributing Factors of Crimes Committed by Problem Gamblers

- ◆ Increasingly large losses
- ◆ Exhausted resources to money
- ◆ Threats
- ◆ Opportunity
- ◆ Gambling will eventually resolve financial problems



Prison Culture and Gambling

- ◆ A high percentage of problem gamblers engage in illegal activities (2/3rds)
- ◆ A high percentage of problem gamblers go unidentified
- ◆ Gambling is a common feature of the prison culture



Gambling On A Continuum

- ◆ No Gambling
 - ◆ Casual Social
 - ◆ Serious Social
 - ◆ Harmful Involvement
 - ◆ Pathological Gambling
- ◆ Depending on the severity of gambling we would match the intensity of treatment.



Gambling in Correctional Facilities

- ◆ Card Playing
- ◆ Sports Betting
- ◆ Games of Skill



Offenders Wagers

- ◆ Money
- ◆ Canteen
- ◆ Tobacco
- ◆ Drugs
- ◆ Sexual Favours



Similarities Between Offenders and Non-offenders

- ◆ Both struggle with issues around causes of gambling
- ◆ Family Members have been affected by problem gamblers behaviour
- ◆ Both Share emotional difficulties
 - Poor self worth
 - Coping strategies
 - Struggles with guilt and shame



Statistics of Criminal Acts Associated with Gambling

- ◆ 45% of Pathological gamblers had committed crime solely for the purpose to financing their gambling.
- ◆ The prevalence rates for adults who report committing a crime for gambling funds is 65% and higher.
- ◆ Incarcerated adults 97 % of Pathological gamblers reported committing an illegal act to finance gambling



Therefore Treatment of offenders prior to release is essential !

- ◆ Currently running Treatment program at Frontenac Institution, Pittsburgh Institution, and Collins Bay Institution.
- ◆ Treatment Program consists of 8 weeks 2x weekly or 15 weeks 1x weekly
- ◆ Currently going to pilot a 5 session psycho-educational evening group at FI.
- ◆ Referral to In house Treatment Windsor PGS
- ◆ Referral to home city for follow up



- ◆ Comments made by offenders
- ◆ Confidentiality contract – very important
- ◆ Only person who took the time to explain things.
- ◆ I have a feeling of hope.
- ◆ OQ 31- shows improvement
- ◆ Favorable Outcomes pre/post testing



HELPFUL SCREENING TOOLS

- ◆ Problem Gambling Severity Index
- ◆ South Oaks Gambling Screen
- ◆ CAMH Short Screen
- ◆ GA 20 Questionnaire
- ◆ DSM-IV Criteria: Pathological Gambling



Other useful treatment tools

- ◆ Inventory of Gambling Situations (IGS)
- ◆ Self Monitoring of gambling or urges to gamble
- ◆ Self-Help Workbook – How to quit or reduce your gambling.
- ◆ Off Site Self exclusion program
- ◆ All information can be found on CAMH's Website. Problemgambling.ca
- ◆ Referrals to Residential PG Treatment.



Any Questions?

Thank You!

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