

Education and Awareness Agenda 2021-2024

Office of Responsible Gambling

The Office recognises the key role that education and awareness plays in preventing and reducing gambling harm. Our Education and Awareness Agenda provides a high-level framework for how these initiatives will be addressed over the three-year period 2021-2024. This approach aligns with the objectives of the Office of Responsible Gambling Strategic Plan 2021-2024.

Education and awareness objectives

We aim to prevent and reduce gambling harm experienced by the NSW community and particularly by priority populations. We achieve this by:

- recognising gambling harm as a public health issue
- developing evidence-based projects and programs that consider the social determinants of health
- acknowledging that gambling harm occurs on a continuum and that each individual and community experience is unique
- integrating the perspectives and views of people with lived experience of gambling harm in project and program development.

Our public health approach in practice

Public health is one of the nine guiding principles in our strategic plan and is defined as:

‘Recognising gambling harm as a public health issue and social, economic and environmental factors all play a role influencing individual behaviour. All stakeholders have a role to play in prevention and early intervention at a population level.’

In practice, this means:

- raising awareness and educating communities about the risks of gambling and gambling harm through awareness campaigns and other tailored education initiatives
- partnering with and funding stakeholders to deliver gambling harm minimisation projects and programs for their local communities
- developing evidence-based programs and project approaches that prevent and reduce gambling harm among our priority populations
- considering the social determinants of health in the delivery of our initiatives and addressing them where relevant
- empowering people to make informed choices about their own gambling
- empowering communities to take action to reduce the effects of gambling harm
- developing informative resources to educate people about gambling harm and the risks of gambling
- advocating for measures that support safer gambling behaviours.



Priority populations

We are committed to preventing and reducing gambling harm for people at risk and for the general community. Taking a public health approach means that we seek to promote the health of the entire NSW population by raising general community awareness, as people from all walks of life and locations across the state can be impacted by gambling. We also recognise the need to prioritise those sections of the community that are more at risk of gambling harm, and that interventions for these populations must be responsive to their needs and circumstances.

Our priority populations include:

- **Men**, who are more likely to gamble and to have problems with gambling than women, and are less likely to seek help.
- **Young people aged 12-24**, who participate in different and evolving forms of gambling and gambling-like activities than previous generations, and have significant exposure to gambling, online and through advertising.
- **Culturally diverse communities**, who are more likely to experience gambling harm, despite their lower participation rates. Factors like different beliefs around luck and chance and migration stressors also contribute to harm.
- **Affected others**, including carers, partners and family members, who can experience harm as a result of someone else's gambling.
- **People with co-morbidities**, who may be more likely to experience gambling harm and face barriers to accessing support, including those with mental health and substance abuse issues, people with a disability, and those at risk of suicide, homelessness and domestic violence.

Some populations can influence the gambling harm experienced by others. From an intervention perspective, they represent a strategic opportunity to address gambling harm creatively and effectively.

These influencing populations include:

- **Parents and partners**, who play a significant role in influencing the gambling harm experienced by their children and/or partners.
- **Teachers**, who have unique access and opportunities to influence young people, including through formal education in the classroom.
- **Health and community professionals**, who can provide support to people experiencing gambling harm who seek treatment through their services, including referral to support services.

Our approach to projects and programs

Our approach to projects and programs depends on the needs of the population. We fund and implement education and awareness initiatives through partnerships, grants programs direct commissioning and through directly developing and delivering work ourselves.

The intervention types we use for our projects and programs include:

- **Settings based approaches:** settings such as schools, workplaces or venues are used to address gambling harm.
- **Awareness campaigns and social media:** education for the general community and priority populations using traditional and digital marketing, advertising, public relations and events. Social media involves developing engaging and relevant content to raise awareness of GambleAware, and the risks of gambling and gambling harm.
- **Resource development:** to educate the general community and priority populations about gambling harm. These may include factsheets, booklets, videos, animations, podcasts and infographics.
- **Capacity building:** to upskill community members and stakeholders to support or educate people impacted by gambling harm.
- **Community education:** informing and educating priority populations about gambling harm.
- **Lived experience:** sharing the experiences and perspectives of people with lived experience of gambling harm through our projects and programs.



Evaluation

We evaluate our projects and programs to ensure that they are effective at preventing and reducing gambling harm and to inform future approaches. All projects and programs will be evaluated using either an in-house or independent evaluation. Evaluation methods will be dependent on the project or program. The evaluation will align to the outcome logic developed for each project or program.

Our Education and Awareness Agenda will be monitored through:

- changes in population indicators collected through population-based surveys
- changes in audience reach as obtained through website and social media analytics
- successful engagement and positive feedback from partners
- increased utilisation of GambleAware services.

