

# Gaming CARE

The Hotels Responsible  
Gambling Early  
Intervention Agency

Australian Hotels Association (SA)

An initiative of  
**aha|sa**  
Australian Hotels Association (SA)

# Newsletter

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The Hotels Responsible Gambling Early Intervention Agency Ltd trading as *Gaming Care* is an initiative of the the Australian Hotels Association – South Australian Branch AHA (SA). The AHA (SA) is one of the oldest business based associations in South Australia, having operated continuously since 1873. The Association's role is to represent and promote the interests of licensed hotels throughout the state.

The AHA (SA) members account for more than 87% of the hotel industry in SA. They range from small country hotels to five-star hotels and resorts. Over 80% of the South Australian Hotel Industry also provides gaming and gambling facilities.

#### **HOTELS RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING EARLY INTERVENTION AGENCY LTD.**

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## Gaming Care Out and About

We often hear mention of the 'ivory tower' syndrome – well that certainly isn't the case with Gaming Care, just the opposite in fact. The team are always 'out and about' taking on our core business in ensuring that hotel management and staff have the assistance they need in addressing the complex problem gambling issue, building and maintaining relationships with gambling help services and involving themselves in local initiatives and activities.

Country South Australia really knows how to bring people together and this was very evident in two events that Gaming Care Officers attended recently. These were the Maitland and Lucindale Field shows – events that attract thousands of people each year. We were able to work collaboratively with the local gambling help services and the Indigenous state-wide service in staffing information stalls, speaking to many people and handing out information packs, promotional material, balloons for children and generally demonstrating a positive 'working together' image.

Gambling Awareness week will be held 12th – 16th May with this year's theme of 'Busting the Myths'. The Gaming Care team are working with the Office for

Problem Gambling and Gambling Help Services to plan and coordinate a range of activities that will be held across the state so in keeping with our normal practice they will certainly be 'out and about' that week. We are keen to build on the success of last year with hotels actively participating by distributing special Gambling Awareness Week product in gaming rooms.

**Rhonda Turley**  
Executive Officer



Left to right - Gaming Care Officer Didier Vollerin, Lifeline South East gambling counsellors Michelle Osmond & Denise Mackay at the 2007 Lucindale Fair.

# Early Intervention Initiatives – A Gaming Manager’s View



Gaming Care North Metro Workshop at the Stockdale Hotel



Anglicare gambling counsellor Lisa Gilda presenting at Gaming Care Workshop Forum

One of the ways that Gaming Care works to assist hotels in identifying and supporting patrons who may be experiencing difficulties with their gambling is through information forums and tailor-made in house workshops.

Gaming Care Officer Didier Vollerin spoke recently to Barbara from the Midway Tavern on her views of the effectiveness of these initiatives. Here are her comments:

The information we receive is very relevant to all roles and positions within the gaming room and valuable as there are so many different situations we have to deal with from time to time.

I have always felt confident in terms of approaching patrons but attending the forums has also assisted me and I know that some of our staff that are relatively new to gaming have achieved a better understanding and are now more confident. Seeing examples and

hearing from others helps staff to develop approaches to any situations.

Meeting people from the services helps in building rapport and a working relationship – it is always easier to ring someone that you have met and feel comfortable with. I have over the years needed to use these services and have received positive feedback from patrons that have been recommended to them.

Her final comment was that “the forum was excellent and it didn’t go too long for people to lose concentration”

Barbara’s comments mirror the general view of other gaming managers and staff who have attended our forums and workshops and we appreciate her taking the time and her willingness for us to use them.

**If you would like a workshop for your venue or a combined one for venues in your area please contact your designated Gaming Care Officer.**

## The Gambling Rehabilitation

OARS SA is a non-government community organisation that is dedicated to the provision of excellent services for people involved in, affected by, or at risk of being drawn into the criminal justice system. The vision of OARS SA is to strengthen communities by reducing crime and its impact and places value on their clients and their diversity.

OARS SA has a number of services in the areas of Housing support, Drug and Alcohol Counselling, Partners of Prisoners Program, Financial Counselling, the Cadell bus service and a Gambling Support Service.

The OARS SA Gambling Support Service (G.S.S.) is a state wide service working as part of the Gambling Help Services network. The service supports individuals who are drawn into, or are at risk of entering the criminal justice system in South Australia as a result of problematic gambling behaviours and the families affected as a result.

The overall aim of the program is to promote and support lifestyle changes for people as a result of problem gambling and aims to reduce the number of individuals with gambling issues from being incarcerated for lengthy periods of time through recognised therapeutic approaches and Court diversion.

The Gambling Support Service is confidential and provides individualised

## GamingCare

Mission Statement - *Our Long Term Ambition*

### Our Goal:

The ambition of *Gaming Care* is to positively encourage and assist all hotel gaming venues, their owners, management and staff (and therefore the collective Industry) to comply with both the ‘letter’ and spirit of the Codes of Practice.

### The Reward:

By embracing *Gaming Care’s* philosophy and utilising the agency’s expertise, resources, services and networks, hotels with gaming and gambling services will achieve and maintain economic viability while delivering their services in a socially responsible manner.

### The Beneficiaries:

Such an outcome will benefit our customers, the industry, its owners, investors, financiers, shareholders, employees, their collective families, the taxpayers of this state and the broader community in South Australia.

# Gaming Support Service at Offender's Aid and on Services (OARS)

case work/management, counselling, family intervention, appropriate referrals, group programs, advocacy and Court support. The GSS has the capacity to provide ongoing support and/or counselling to the individual and/or family members if an incarceration period is imposed. This occurs on a face-to-face level within Yatala and the Adelaide Pre-Release Centre, and can be arranged by telephone for other correctional institutions within South Australia.

The G.S.S. philosophy is a belief that Individuals and families affected by problem gambling have the opportunity to access support services to assist them to rebuild their lives by minimizing harm to themselves and the community.'

The 'Real Deal' card deck, an OARS SA community education initiative, promotes awareness of the different stages of gambling and the problems it causes for individuals, families, and the community as a whole. The resource is used widely within therapeutic individual and group settings within the G.S.S. and has been adopted as a valuable resource within the sector.



OARS Gambling Help Service counsellors Lyn Wilson and Tricia Parsons

Early intervention is a key component of this service, as it assists the likelihood of eliminating or reducing prison sentences attached to gambling related crime. If you would like further information or

would like the service presented to your organization in greater detail. Please contact either Lyn Wilson (Support Worker) on 0402 052 320 or Tricia Parsons (Team Leader) (0408 853 061).



Gaming Care Officer Jarrod Egan delivering Responsible Gambling Workshop



Gaming Care Office Megan Webb, Mandy Caines (H & L Australia) & Tracey Riggs-Barker at AHA|SA regional meeting



Gambling Awareness Week 2007 forum



Rosette - Gaming Care Office with Talbot Hotel Manager Rosette Chisolm.

# Gambling Helpline – A 24 Hour Service



The Gambling Helpline, which is funded through the Gamblers Rehabilitation Fund, is a 24 hour 7 day a week, telephone information, counselling and referral service for South Australians who are adversely affected by problem gambling behaviour.

The Gambling helpline is intended as an accessible contact point for anyone needing assistance and/or information related to problem gambling including those affected by the gambling of others.

The majority of calls we received during 2006 -2007 were mainly from gamblers concerned about their own gambling (45%) or family members/significant others who are affected in some way by a gamblers' behaviour – of this group just over half are women with 78% reporting that 'poker machines' were the preferred form of gambling.

For many callers, it was the first time they had called the Gambling Helpline and most had not sought prior help from any other services.

The most frequently reported reason callers contact the Helpline is because they have lost control of their gambling, while a quarter state that financial and/

or legal reasons prompted them to seek help. It is quite common for callers to be in distress when they first make contact, with about a third of callers identified as being either at risk to themselves or others. Gambling Helpline staff provide crisis counselling and are able to assess callers for referral to crisis intervention services.

*"The Gambling helpline is intended as an accessible contact point for anyone needing assistance and/or information related to problem gambling including those affected by the gambling of others."*

Information and counselling are the forms of assistance required most often as many have never talked about the gambling problem prior to calling the Helpline. Gambling Helpline counsellors provide a client-centered approach and based on an appropriate assessment, assist callers through the provision of a range of other interventions such as motivational interviewing and/or relapse

prevention therapy. The Gambling Helpline not only provides support, information and counselling, but has proved to be a highly effective referral point, with a third of callers being referred for further, ongoing professional counselling to gambling help services.

The Gambling Helpline also provides information and assistance to gambling help services counsellors, industry personnel, other health and welfare professionals, students and members of the public who require information about problem gambling. The Gambling Helpline is also able to assist callers with referral to regulatory bodies such as the Independent Gambling Authority (IGA) and the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner.

In an effort to improve outcomes for problem gamblers, the capacity of the gambling helpline is about to expand to take on a broader role in providing ongoing counselling for clients that have difficulty accessing mainstream services, referral and follow-up of clients.

**Lynn Stevens**

**Manager, Gambling Helpline.**

## Latest study on identifying problem gamblers in gambling venues

November 2007 saw the release of a report undertaken on behalf of Gambling Research Australia by the Office of Gaming and Racing, Department of Justice, Victoria. South Australia had a role in this research through the work of Dr Paul Delfabbro and Dr Alexandra Osborn from the University of Adelaide.

The report concluded that the identification of problem gamblers within venues is theoretically possible and that there are a number of visible indicators that can be used to differentiate problem gamblers from others who gamble. The

report also suggests a number of changes that might enhance the ability of staff to identify and assist patrons in venues, including two relating to staff training:

- More extensive training into the nature of gambling and the range of visible problem gambling behaviours that might be observed
- More specific training in relation to interactions with patrons, including:
  - How to approach gamblers
  - Anger management
  - Conflict resolution and
  - Recommending and referral to counselling

The gambling industry in other states does not have an equivalent model to Gaming Care that has already developed an in-house 'tailor made' venue training initiative, to assist venue staff in identifying and supporting patrons experiencing difficulties with their gambling behaviour. We are looking at how the findings from this report can further enhance our work in this area.

A copy of the 327 page report can be found at [www.gamblingresearch.org.au](http://www.gamblingresearch.org.au) and can be downloaded either in its entirety or by chapter from this site.