

# SUPPORTING SERVICES: GAMBLER'S HELP AND COUNSELLING

FOR PEOPLE FROM THE CALD COMMUNITIES, THE STIGMA ATTACHED TO GAMBLING CAN LEAD GAMBLERS TO ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THEIR PROBLEMS THEMSELVES OR WITHIN THEIR FAMILIES. PROFESSIONAL HELP MAY ONLY BE SOUGHT IF PEOPLE ARE AWARE OF AND UNDERSTAND THE SERVICES ON OFFER.

## I REALLY NEED HELP, BUT

- What is counselling as I have never heard of it before coming to Australia?
- How is it supposed to be helpful by only talking to a "stranger"?
- My English is not good enough. Will the counsellor talk to me in my first language?

*If the above concerns sound familiar to you, keep on reading and learn more about what counselling is and how a counsellor can help you.*

## WHAT IS COUNSELLING

*COUNSELLING IS A PROCESS OF TALKING ABOUT AND WORKING THROUGH YOUR PERSONAL PROBLEMS WITH A COUNSELLOR. THE COUNSELLOR WOULD HELP YOU TO ADDRESS YOUR ISSUES IN A POSITIVE WAY AND HELP YOU TO:*

- Clarify the issues
- Explore options
- Develop strategies
- Increase self-awareness

### **IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO KNOW:**

- It is a **confidential** service and everything you discuss with the counsellor is private!
- **No** issue is too big or too small to ask for support!
- **Anyone** who is worried about a personal concern can seek help from a counsellor!

## FREE SUPPORTING SERVICE: GAMBLER'S HELP

*GAMBLER'S HELP IS A FREE AND CONFIDENTIAL SERVICE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE AFFECTED BY GAMBLING RELATED PROBLEM ACROSS VICTORIA. IT OFFERS SUPPORT, ADVICE AND INFORMATION TO PEOPLE AFFECTED BY GAMBLING (BOTH GAMBLERS AND NON-GAMBLERS) AND TO THE BROADER COMMUNITY.*

Counselling for gambling-related problems offers:

- A professional, confidential and free service
- A thorough assessment of gambling and other related issues
- Information to fit the needs of the client
- Referrals to other agencies and help services where appropriate
- Services for individuals, couples, families or groups
- Support for both the gambling and/or their partners and families

**THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF COMMUNITY SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS THAT PROVIDE FREE IN-LANGUAGE AND CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE COMMUNITY EDUCATION, COUNSELLING, PEER SUPPORT AND OTHER SERVICES TO INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES THAT ARE FROM A CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSE BACKGROUND.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

***Q: I heard that counselling is about only talking to a stranger. How can it be helpful to me?***

A: Counselling is a talk-based therapy. Counsellors will sit down with you and help you find the real problems that concern and worry you. After finding the real issues, they would like to help you set a goal in order to make changes. The whole process is not about telling you what to do, but to empower you so that you could realise and find your own strength to deal with the issues.

***Q: I have very supportive family and friends to talk to. Is it still necessary to seek help from a counsellor?***

A: It is great and really lucky of you if you have a trustful friend or family member to talk about your issues. Continue talk to them! However, while a friend or family might know you better, a counsellor is a trained and qualified professional to provide the service. They normally know better how to help you and find your issues efficiently, clarify the issues and address your problems in a positive way.

***Q: I have big trouble with my own financial situation due to gambling. Will the financial counsellor help me recover the debt if I seek help from them?***

A: The answer is yes and no. While they are not able to give you actual money, they do help you understand and exercise your rights and responsibilities in relation to debt recovery and payment of bills. They also help you go through the government concessions and entitlements, such as the ways you can reduce your financial risks, help you understand your credit file and negotiate hardship agreements on your behalf and help you manage the debts.

***Q: I live in a small community. Will my community member find out my gambling problems through my counsellor?***

A: It is important to remember that it is part of their professional code of conduct to keep confidentiality. What's been discussed at the sessions are only between you and them. An extreme example would be, even if you come across your counsellor at a shopping centre, they will not even say hi to you voluntarily in order to keep your privacy.

## HOW TO GET IN TOUCH

***To get in touch with a local, free of charge counsellor, you can also call Gambler's Help on 1800 858 858 or Gambler's Help Youthline on 1800 262 376. Interpretation services can be arranged for free upon request.***

Most of the content of this information sheet comes from the Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation website. For further information, please visit: <https://www.responsiblegambling.vic.gov.au/>.