

Advance training on the treatment of problem - pathological gamblers

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The legalization of new forms of gambling is increasing in most western and Asian countries. This trend has created a situation in which more and more people will develop serious gambling problems, for which they will need to seek professional help. Pathological gambling was officially recognized in 1980 with the publication of the DSM-III (A.P.A., 1980). Currently, cognitive and behavioural therapy is the only empirically supported intervention providing high rates of positive outcomes in the management of problem gambling.

This workshop focused on the clinical applications of our knowledge. The following topics were discussed and illustrated:

1. The basic notions of the psychology of gambling. Why do people gamble?
2. How to identify internal monologues and erroneous perceptions
3. Diagnostic of a pathological gamblers: An in depth discussion of the construct of PG
4. Differences between a social and a pathological gamblers: What are the risk variables
5. How to identify and modify the erroneous perceptions
6. How to implement behavioural interventions
7. How to cope with impaired or loss of control in PG
8. Different avenues to reduce drop outs

Role-playing and clinical material suggested by participants were used to illustrate how to conduct cognitive and behavioural therapy. Finally, we raised the issue of the viability of controlled gambling in comparison to abstinence as treatment goal.

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12. How to implement behavioural interventions
13. How to cope with impaired or loss of control in PG
14. Different avenues to reduce drop outs
15. Abstinence vs Controlled gambling as a treatment outcome