

Key discussion points

- Impact of COVID-19 on the land-based gambling environment – particularly on venues, wagering providers, staff, management and customers.
- Recent environmental changes – Revised Responsible Gambling Codes of Conduct and Ministerial Directions.
- Staff training and support– including support and practices around increased risk of gambling harm from land-based gambling reopening.

Member Areas of Interest: The experience of members in the receipt of Responsible Service of Gaming (RSG) and Responsible Codes of Conduct (Codes) information, training and support discussed, with some inconsistencies noted by members.

Members expressed some frustration with the communication and consistency of messaging from differing areas of government, particularly around the Codes and associated Ministerial Directions.

Members sought clarification on RSG requirements and accessibility, with the Foundation committing to re-sharing available information and following up on other communication issues.

Foundation Response to COVID-19 and Changed Gambling Environment: Noted the transition to tele-health for counselling services and work with government and stakeholders regarding venue reopening process.

Venue Support Program adapted to virtual training delivery with an indication of the continued use of this, along with reinstated face-to-face training. Lived Experience Committee used to provide insights on Foundation prevention messaging during lockdown and around increased risk of harm.

Impact of COVID-19 on Gambling Environment: Difficulties for all land-based providers during lock-down, gaming machine, wagering, casino and keno providers. Noting challenges in responding to government directions, short timelines, and the fluid environment.

Impact on business owners/operators and staff is significant and many operators struggling with staff levels and recruitment in the reopening period.

Those members running self-exclusion programs noted a spike in exclusions in the immediate reopening period with customer behaviour and increases in customer stress and unacceptable behavior noted.

Movement to cashless and contactless transactions where possible and member perception of need for gambling to be allowed to move in this direction - members agreed to need to maintain or improve upon consumer protection measures in making any such move.

Next steps (actions)

- Foundation to share RSG Fact Sheet and information on accessibility/requirements with members.
- Foundation to explore training and development opportunities relevant to industry employees (i.e. applicable outside of a clinical setting).

- Foundation to liaise with DJCS and VCGLR in effort to improve communication with Code authors on Code related issues. Foundation also to work with Venue Support Workers to reiterate importance of accurate and consistent messaging.
- Members to provide further information on self-exclusion usage and indications of customer behavior or distress within venues.

Next Meeting

September 2021 – Time and date to be confirmed.