

The Potential Health Impacts of a Casino in the City of Peterborough



Dr. Rosana Pellizzari,
Medical Officer of Health
March 5, 2013

Prevalence Rates of Problem Gambling

- For adults (18+): Ranged from between 1.2% to 5.9% with an average rate of 3.6%
- In Peterborough, this would translate to roughly **3,985** problem gamblers
- Among young adults (18 – 24 years): 6.9%
- In Peterborough, this would translate to **904** young adults

Access and Proximity

- EGMs and live gaming tables = gambling activities most identified by problem gamblers
- Prevalence rates doubled in first year after a casino opened in Niagara Falls (from 2.5% to 4.4%)
- In Peterborough: a doubling of the rates would result in an additional 3,984 residents (18+) becoming problem gamblers from 3,985 (3.6%) to 7,969 (7.2%)
- A study in New Zealand found that the people who lived closest to the casino were more likely to gamble and to become problem gamblers

At Risk Populations

- Problem drinkers/heavy alcohol use
 - Seniors
 - Youth
 - First Nations
 - People living on low income
 - Casino workers
- = commonality ⇒ low income,
greater financial risk taking



Health Costs

- Individual: mental and physical health issues
- Family: divorce, family breakdown, compromised child development through neglect and poverty
- Workplace: lost productivity and job loss



Financial Costs

- Estimated annual cost: \$20,000 and \$56,000 per problem gambler
- Prevalence rate for problem gamblers of 3.6% = 3,985 problem gamblers in the City and County of Peterborough
- In Peterborough: Cost x # of problem gamblers = range of \$79.7 million to \$223.2 million annually



Impact on Broader Social Health Issues

- Employment
- Economic development
- Crime
- Neighbourhood impacts
- Social safety net



Strategies for Mitigating Risk

- Intervention for problem gamblers \Rightarrow 1 to 2% seek treatment
- Prevention
 - a) Education and Awareness
 - b) Policies to reduce harm (e.g., limiting hours; slowing EGMs down; reducing maximum bet sizes; mandating a daily loss maximum)