11 CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

11.1 Conclusions

The state of gambling in the Northern Territory has changed considerably since the 2005 Gambling Prevalence Survey. The following summarises key findings from this report.

- Annual participation decreased significantly since 2005 for all activities except racetrack and sports betting, which increased significantly, and casino table games and keno, which increased non-significantly.
- Frequency of gambling (generally weekly and monthly) has decreased significantly across all types of gambling activities, except, racetrack betting.
- In the NT adult population, prevalence of problem gambling, moderate risk and low risk gambling was 0.68% (up to 0.90%), 2.90% (up to 4.09%) and 8.13% (up to 9.02%) respectively, which equates to 1,206 problem gamblers, 5128 moderate risk gamblers and 14,383 low risk gamblers.
    - ➢ 2015 results were not directly comparable to the 2005 survey, because the older survey used a 'regular' gambler category that filtered who would receive the PGSI.
    - ➢ To assess the bias caused by the 2005 'regular' gambler filter in PGSI estimates, a 'regular' gambler filter applied to the 2015 PGSI estimates. It was found that if the PGSI is only administered to regular gamblers compared with all gamblers, then problem gambling was under-estimated by 1.6 times, moderate risk gambling by 3.4 times and low risk gambling by 6.3 times.
- Problem and moderate risk gamblers were over-represented amongst gamblers who nominated EGMs (16% and 19%) and sports betting (10% and 22%) as their highest spend activity were more likely to be problem and moderate risk gamblers, compared with all gamblers (4.7% and 10.7%).
- More than 23,000 Territorians experienced negative consequences because of another person's gambling, representing 13% of the adult population.
    - ➢ Experiencing negative consequences from another person's gambling was higher for Indigenous respondents (28%), single parent households (32%), group households (24%), those with gross annual income of $70,000 to $99,999 (22%), smokers who smoked more than 10 cigarettes per day (37%) and those who ran out of money for essential in the last year (48%).
    - ➢ The most common negative consequences experienced because of another person's gambling were raiding savings (6%), friend relationship problems (6%), feeling stress/anxiety/depression (5%), run out of money for bills (5%), family relationship problems (5%), borrowing from family/friends (4%), run out of money for food (2%), run out of money for rent/mortgage (2%).
- The majority community opinion indicates a preference for a decrease in EGM numbers in both hotels (50%) and clubs (53%), but less so for casinos (41%), and this opinion was more common amongst weekly EGM players.
- Real player losses in casino EGMs have decreased from a high in 2007/8 of $113 million to $79 million. Real player losses in the hotel and club EGMs have decreased from a high in 2008/9 of $96 million to $83 million, and now account for greater share of EGM player losses.

- Similar to real player loss, hotel and club player loss per machine ($74,000) is now similar to that observed in the casino ($75,000) for the first time since EGMs have been in community venues.

11.2 Future research

This report contains a broad-brush look at the 2015 Gambling Prevalence and Wellbeing Survey data. Statistical testing was mostly done at the simplest level (i.e. looking at associations between only two variables), and consequently, limited conclusions can be drawn from these analyses. For example, a number of factors were significantly associated with negative consequences from someone else's gambling; however, until multivariable models are developed, we are unable to determine which variable are associated with negative consequences, while controlling for other significant predictors.

While not being comprehensive, the following dot points summarise pieces of research that are still required.

- *Understanding the bias in using a 'regular' gambler category in gambling prevalence surveys*: Quantify the bias in PGSI risk category estimates by age and gender through comparing PGSI estimates for 'regular' and 'all' gamblers. Calculate multiplicative factors that can be applied to PGSI estimates from past surveys that used the 'regular' gambler filter prior to screening for problem gambling risk.
- *What negative consequences do at-risk gamblers experience?* An analysis of how at-risk gamblers answered individual PGSI questions and the types of negative consequences they identified.
- *Factor structure of the Gambling Motivation and Expectancies Scale (GOES)*: Carry out a factor analysis of the 18 GOES items to determine the factor structure and dimensionality of the scale.
- *Do different motivations to gamble affect problem gambling risk and harms experienced?* An analysis of the GOES and its relationship to gambling preferences, problem gambling risk, and other socio-demographic, socioeconomic, and health risk factors.
- *Associations between negative consequences experienced because of another person's gambling*: Analysis of the types of negative consequences people are experiencing because of another person's gambling and their relationship to the person whose gambling was causing them to experience negative consequences.
- *What are the characteristics of people who experience harms from another person's gambling?* Develop a multivariable adjusted model for negative consequences from another person's gambling that includes socio-demographic, socioeconomic, and health risk factors, along with motivations for gambling, activity preferences and frequency of gambling by activity.
- *Problem gambling risk and negative consequences from gambling in the Indigenous population of the Northern Territory*: The significantly higher levels of problem gambling risk and harms experienced from another person's gambling amongst the Indigenous sample require more detailed analyses to better understand the extent of harm from gambling in this population.

- *Does venue size and location predict EGM player losses in community venues in the Northern Territory?* Further analysis of the EGM player loss data for hotels and clubs to identify the effect of venue size (i.e. number of EGMs) and location on player losses and player losses per machine.