Gambling Awareness and Problem Gambling Interventions in UK Prisons

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Can we evidence...

- prevalence of problem gambling in criminal justice populations in the UK?
- a link to crime?
- interventions that work?
- resilience and turning points for intervention?
## Pilot Prevalence - Comparison between BGPS National data from (Wardle et al 2007) and Prison pilot data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gambling Behaviour</th>
<th>Prison (201 Male)</th>
<th>National N=4333</th>
<th>Z= Sig at 95%</th>
<th>Prison (222 Female)</th>
<th>National N= 4636</th>
<th>Z= Sig at 95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstinent</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>60.4%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>7.695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Problem Gambler</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>61.1%</td>
<td>14.53</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
<td>14.712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>5.534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Risk</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>12.902</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>15.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Gambler</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>11.024</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>13.998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling Category</td>
<td>Prison (792 Male)</td>
<td>National N=4333</td>
<td>Z= Sig at 95%</td>
<td>Prison (156 Female)</td>
<td>National N=4636</td>
<td>Z= Sig at 95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstinent</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>5.618</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>5.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Problem Gambler</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>19.257</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>10.765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6.646</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4.866</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium Risk</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11.698</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
<td>9.956</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem Gambler</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>19.691</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>13.431</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clear Evidence of Prevalence

- ¼ Male prisoners in England and Scotland
- 14% of female prisoners in England
- Significantly higher than the general population
7.3% of men but less than 1% of women considered their current offence was linked to gambling.

11% of men linked gambling to past offending (22% of those who gambled did so) as did 12% of female gamblers.

46% of male and 37% of female prisoners thought gambling caused problems for fellow prisoners.
Some ways prisoners think their offence was linked to gambling

- Sex industry links
- Gambled with life in general
- Stole money to pay gambling debts
- Used money obtained through crime gamble
- Sold drugs to generate money to gamble
- Gambled to generate money to alleviate personal deficit caused by offending behaviour
- Fighting & arguing over gambling
- Robbing a betting shop
Global Comparisons

- A review of 8 studies since 2000 found a mean rate of 25% of incarcerated populations exhibit some vulnerability to gambling problems;
- Inmates who do gamble tend to do so regularly, and problem and pathological gamblers are disproportionately represented among this group (Williams et al, 2005).
- BUT the prevalence of gambling within prison populations appears lower than in the general population.
- So how is it that in this vulnerable population some prisoners appear to be resilient to gambling problems?
Complete prevalence questionnaire (N=500)

**Pilot Model**

**Group 1:** Volunteer for treatment (eligible) – Short interview to ensure informed consent and screen (N=20)

- Enters programme – seen 6 times

  Exit interview and screen

  Screen at 6 month follow up (telephone interview)

**Group 2:** Volunteer for treatment (not eligible as too close to release) – Short interview to ensure informed consent and administer screen (control N=10)

  Screen at 6 month follow up (telephone interview)

**Group 3:** Volunteer for treatment (eligible but insufficient places) – Short interview to ensure informed consent and screen (N=20).

  Screen and Enter programme – seen 6 times

  Exit interview and screen

  Screen at 6 month follow up (telephone interview)
Group 1: Volunteer for treatment (eligible) – Short interview to ensure informed consent and screen (N=10 N=8)

Enters programme – seen 6 (3) times

Exit interview and screen (N=8)

Screen at 6 month follow up (telephone interview) (N=4)

Complete prevalence questionnaire (N=250 N=201)

Group 2/3: Volunteer for treatment (both ineligible and eligible but insufficient places) – Short interview to ensure informed consent and screen (N=20 N=7).

Screen (N=7)

Did not enter programme
Outcome Themes

- Raised awareness (particularly re pre-occupation)
- Group discussions with peers highly valued;
- Programme coach was central rather than workbook;
- Participants wanted to identify alternative ways to occupy their time upon their release.
What single important behaviour change do you think you will make as a result of attending?

- M6. *Just by changing my pattern of the day and doing constructive things.*
- M7. *Saying ‘no’ to gambling…*
- M2. *Finding better things to do with my time when I am released.*
Challenges

- Maintaining motivation
- Integrating with other accredited interventions
- Prison regime
- Resettlement and follow up
Now doing 36 month screening and tracking in 6 prisons England and Scotland

In-depth interviews at 3 time points to obtain narratives on lifestyles, adversities, resilience and critical points

Longitudinal tracking on Police National Computer
Looking at Resilience

- Adapted CYRM from International Resilience Project with Michael Ungar
- Free narrative component focusing on the 4 aspects (individual, relationships, community and context)
Looking at potential connections

- Drug use
- Alcohol use
- Physical and mental health
- Criminal careers/pathways
- How all of this connects to points of intervention – what can help and when?
Some early resilience findings from pilot

- Female offender resilience scores do not differ significantly between each resilience category (individual, relationship, community and cultural).
- Female problem/pathological gamblers have a significantly lower (p=0.05) overall average resilience score.
Gender difference...

- But even though males have higher problem gambling rates they are not yet showing lower resilience scores in the problem gambling group
Prevalence questionnaire in 6 prisons (N=1200)

Group 1: Moderate/severe problem gamblers – 9 in each prison
Group 2: Non problem/low risk gamblers – 9 in each prison
Group 3: Abstainers – 9 in each prison

First interview pre-release: 1 – 2 months after questionnaire completion. In-depth (approx 1 hour) gathering personal history, gambling career data

Second interview: 6-8 months later in community. In depth (approx 1 hour) probing gambling careers and resilience factors since leaving prison

Third interview: 6-8 months later in community. In depth (approx 1 hour) continuing to probe gambling careers and resilience factors since leaving prison

Tracking crime careers of all on PNC