

Webinar - Introducing the Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines

English Transcript

(0:00)

(Bryce Barker:) All right, thank you, everyone, for joining us today. Welcome to today's webinar introducing the Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines. My name is Bryce Barker. I'm a knowledge broker at the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction or CCSA. We thank you for joining us and hope you'll find this presentation informative and helpful.

So, first, I'd like to do a land acknowledgement. While we may be gathered today in a virtual setting, we do have people joining us from right across Canada. Our organization, CCSA, is based in Ottawa, so I'd like to acknowledge that I am on the unceded and unsurrendered territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin people, but I encourage all of you, no matter where you may be today, to take a brief moment to reflect on the land you're on today as well.

So, we do have a few housekeeping items to get to.

So, please keep your microphone muted and video off, if possible. We do have a few colleagues in the background, and if something does flip on by accident, they'll be turning it off. If you want to set your video settings so that you can only see the presenters, we invite you to go to the bottom of your screen and click on the video settings. You'll be able to click through, and there's a meetings option and you can hide non-video participants. So once you've checked that box, please close that window and join us in the webinar again. So, the session will be recorded, and the recording will be available upon request in the near future.

If you have a question, please type it in the chat box. Our colleagues will be looking out for that, so if you can put a Q at the beginning of the question, that will help us see it as a question and make sure that we're collecting them. And again, any time that a question comes up during the speakers going through the slides, go ahead and ask, and then we'll collect them as we go.

We understand some of the items may be difficult for people, and you'll notice in the chat that we've provided a few options for seeking help if you need it today. So, Wellness Together Canada and a few other options are in the chat, so please access those if you need them.

If you're having technical issues, please contact Telus Business Technical Support, 1-844-626-6638.

So, next we'll introduce our speakers for today.

Our first speaker is Dr. David Hodgins.

(2:27)

David Hodgins is a professor in the clinical psychology program in the University of Calgary's Psychology Department and a coordinator with Alberta Gaming Research Institute. He's a registered clinical psychologist in Alberta who provides consulting services to numerous international organizations. His research focuses on various aspects of addictive behaviours, including relapse and recovery from substance use and gambling disorders. Last but not least, he was the co-chair of the scientific committee who developed the guidelines.

Our next speaker will be Matthew Young.

Matthew Young has been working in the field of substance use and addiction for more than 20 years. He leads CCSA's substance use epidemiology research activities, which includes co-chairing the scientific committee that estimates the cost of substance use in Canada. He led the Canadian Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use when it identified the presence of fentanyl in the illicit drug supply and issued one of the first public health alerts on it. Matthew is a member of Health Canada's Canadian Drugs and Substances Observatory and the Public Health Agency of Canada's Opioid Overdose Surveillance Task Group. Finally, he was principal investigator and co-chair on the scientific committee who developed the guidelines.

So, I'll hand over the mic to Matthew and David now to get into the slides.

(David Hodgins:) Thanks so much.

(Mathew Young:) Thank you, Bryce. Everybody can hear me okay and see my slides? Excellent. So, I'm going to take--speak a little bit first. Then I'm going to hand it to David. And then I'll come back a little bit later on and show you a bit of the products that we've developed. So, to begin, I'm just going to talk a little bit about why low-risk gambling guidelines. I'm going to kind of give you an introduction to them. And then I'm going to hand it over to David who will talk about how they were developed and what our recommendations are. And then we will--I'll take you on a little bit of a tour of the website and the knowledge mobilization products that we've created for you to use.

So, a little bit of background information. This project was led by CCSA, and we've been working on it for about four years now. I think we're in our fifth year. It was funded by the Foundation Mise sur toi. And CCSA took on the role to develop the lower-risk gambling guidelines because of our background and our experience working in Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines, as well as the well-known co-morbidity between substance use disorders and problematic gambling.

Why did we need lower-risk gambling guidelines? Well, the lack of evidence-based guidelines about how to gamble in a manner that poses minimal risks is apparent to anybody who works in the field. We generally give people advice, but that advice is fairly nonspecific. Only bet amounts you can afford to lose. Take breaks on a regular basis. Set yourself a time limit.

(5:32)

There was certainly a need that has been identified for quite some time about—for evidence-based lower-risk gambling guidelines to help individuals, social networks, as well as industry and regulators be able to provide advice to people who wish to gamble in a low-risk fashion in a more evidenced manner.

Guidelines are not new to the field. We certainly have guidelines that are associated with cannabis use that came out from our colleagues at CAMH. We have guidelines about how to eat in a way that is most nutritious and best for the body, which have evolved. And the most recent ones were quite different than those released back in the 1980s when I remember them. We also have Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines. So, I think that the idea of guidelines is something that people are familiar with, Canadians are familiar with, and those internationally. So, before I jump—before I hand it over to David, I will just kind of show you the guidelines.

Many of you on the line probably have already seen them, so I won't take too much time. I'll go a little bit more in-depth once we get to the end of the presentation. So, this is the guidelines in a nutshell.

We kind of just say the way to remember them we always say is 1, 4, 2.

One, how much? That's about 1% of household income before tax per month. Don't spend more than that.

Four, how often? That is, gamble no more than four days per month.

And two, how many? Avoid regularly gambling at more than two types of games.

There's a lot of other information on this poster, too. This poster is really one that you'll find available on the website that really kind of is a distillation of all the messages, the guidelines, into one. And if there's one thing that you wanna take a look at and reach for, I would say it's this poster.

Also included on this poster, we have safer gambling tips, as well as some descriptions about the consequences and harms associated with gambling. The guidelines are a result of oversight by a scientific working group. We conducted a risk curve analysis of over 60,000 people from eight different countries.

We conducted surveys. These are all things that David will talk about in a second. We conducted interviews, two literature reviews, and consulted a pan-Canadian advisory committee of over 20 members.

(8:14)

We also collaborated with an international group of experts on many of the risk curves that David will talk about.

So, I will hand it now over to David who can talk to you a little bit about some of the methods and details of how the gambling guidelines were developed, and then I'll join back again at the end and kind of really just walk you through the website and some of the resources that we've developed out of this material.

(David Hodgins:) Thank you, Matthew. And good afternoon, everyone.

It's very exciting to be at this point of the project. It's been, as Matthew said, four years of very active development of them. And my task is to show you—give you a taste of some of the research that we conducted to inform that poster that Matthew will return to and go through in a little bit more detail.

So next slide, Matthew.

Yeah, so as Matthew mentioned, there's a scientific working group that he and I co-chair that has done basically the work I'm going to present now. And, also, the project was supported by a broader advisory committee of stakeholders that we kept informed as we move through the science of what we were finding and the direction we were going to get their kind of support and input.

So, the scientific working group had a number of members. Shawn Currie from the University of Calgary. Magali Dufour from Montreal. As well as Louise Nadeau from Montreal. Natacha Brunelle from Trois-Rivières. And Marie-Claire Flores-Pajot and Catherine Paradis from CCSA.

So, at the onset of the project, you know, almost five years ago, we met and put together a research plan, and we actually published the details of the plan and developed, you know, a sequence of steps we wanted to take in deriving the guidelines. So, this is available if you'd like to look at it in a little bit more detail.

Next slide.

The first issue though was, you know, what harm are we trying to prevent?

(10:38)

You know, prevention of harm seems like a good thing, but from a research perspective, we needed to be more specific on, you know, what specifically were we looking at preventing. And we leaned on a model that was developed in Australia called the Victorian taxonomy that provided a very broad definition and description of the various harms, and from that, we focused on four different areas that we knew that we could reasonably measure in an accurate way in understanding harms, so we settled on kinda this definition of harm.

Next.

And then from that, we focused a lot of our attention on developing the quantitative limits that Matthew talked about, and starting by looking for data sets around the world that would be open to this type of analysis.

The next slide.

So, essentially, to develop the quantitative guidelines, we used what's referred to as a risk curve methodology, so we looked for databases of population surveys where we had some sort of measure of harm from those categories, and then some sort of measure of gambling involvement.

And so, this is an example where you can see on the left-hand side this is the percentage of people reporting financial harms, and on the bottom, it's how many days per month they were gambling.

And essentially the risk curve methodology involves looking at the risk curves and determining where is the uptake? Where does the risk of harm begin to increase in a meaningful way?

Now, we don't just look at the risk curves. There are statistical ways of identifying the best cut-offs, but essentially, that's the methodology that we used.

We did find a number of very high-quality data sets, and we approached the people involved with these data sets, and everyone agreed to participate and have been very active international partners in developing the quantitative guidelines.

So, you can see that we had a number of data sets here from Canada, three in fact, two longitudinal data sets, and one from Alberta, one from Ontario, and a nice data set from Quebec, as well. From the U.S., we had a very strong, large longitudinal data set from Massachusetts. We had data sets from Iceland, from Sweden, from Finland, from France, from Australia and from New Zealand.

So, you can see that it's pretty widely distributed. There are some continents that are excluded that we weren't able to find data that we can analyze from those locations.

(13:51)

And certainly, Asian countries are underrepresented. But, you know, we thought it would be very interesting to compare results across these very different countries as well.

Next slide.

So, we brought all of the partners together and really worked out the details of how we were all going to conduct the same analysis on our data sets.

Next slide.

So, all the data sets included these three indicators of gambling involvement: expenditure—how much you spend on gambling in a month; frequency, number of days; and number of types of gambling played in the past year.

Some of the data sets also included amount of time spent gambling, but we actually didn't find that that ended up being a reliable indicator that we could use.

Next slide.

So yeah, so everybody went off and did their analysis, and we brought it all together.

This is an example of the kind of information that was generated for each of the data sets, so you can see this is two of the North American data sets where we have the likelihood of developing financial harms according to how much gambling a person is doing, and what we did is we compare the different data sets.

And really, we were very amazed that the shapes of the curves were similar—next slide—but also, the range of limits were similar, and so we weren't necessarily expecting that, you know, the indicators of harm would be related to gambling frequency in the same way. And Finland has an assay, or in Quebec, for example. But we found actually a remarkable similarity in the range of limits.

Next slide.

So, you know, the next three slides basically show you the ranges that this analysis showed, so frequency, five to eight days; expenditure, 1% to 3% of income; and number of gambling types.

So, the next step then is our partners also then did some additional analysis where we looked at how the risk of harm increased with different levels of involvement. And the purpose of these analysis were to basically find the sweet spot to kind of refine these broader ranges to determine kind of where, you know, where is the best and most comfortable indicator.

We also did a series of—next slide—of other research projects really to inform that decision around the sweet spot but also to provide all of the additional information that was on that initial poster.

(16:55)

And I'm going to just very quickly kinda give you a taste of some of the projects that we did to, uh, to determine that information.

So, one of them was we did a literature review. We actually contracted a literature review looking at the effects of substance use, alcohol and cannabis use in particular, on gambling behaviour. So, the issue is that's something that needs to be considered in the guidelines.

And we certainly found that there was lots of research that showed that there's a relationship between substance addiction and problematic gambling. But actually, not so much research on the actual impact of drinking or using cannabis while gambling.

Next slide.

We did another literature review, and this is published and available, where we looked at what some of the correlates are of gambling problems, and certainly the strongest correlates are the types of gambling people are doing, but there were some other correlates that were very reliable and had moderate or large relationships with gambling problems. And we've incorporated those into the poster as well, and you'll see that in a moment.

We also had the opportunity to participate in a large survey, online survey, of people who gamble regularly, and we were able to then find out from them strategies that they use spontaneously to control their gambling, and a lot of them aligned with actually paying attention to limits, and also to give them draft guidelines to get their impressions.

Are they satisfied? Are they comfortable? Are they too high? Too low? Would they actually use them? So, we were able to solicit this information from people across the whole range of involvement of gambling, so light gamblers to heavy gamblers.

So again, this is an example of the type of information where we presented them two examples of, you know, guidelines around how often, and four days a month—or sorry, four days—yeah, four days a month or six days a month? And you can see here that the four days, which is the light blue, people were more likely to find that that was just about right. They were a little bit less likely to say that about six days. So that kind of moved us towards thinking that, you know, four days might be more comfortable.

Next slide.

This is the same thing about percent of income. And again, we're able to kind of determine that people were more comfortable with 1% versus 1.5%.

Next slide.

We also then, in addition to doing these surveys with this large group of people, we did more focused focus groups and interviews, structured interviews, with people, again to understand the strategies they use and to solicit their input and opinions on drafts.

Next slide.

We did nine focus groups and five individual interviews in different places across the country, and in both English and French, of people who gamble regularly.

Next slide.

And, you know, basically, the kind of feedback that we got that was very useful was, you know, people like the notion of percentage of income, but they really found it hard to calculate what that would be for themselves, so we've incorporated into the poster a little chart to help people do that.

And they also indicated different ways that they reduce their experience of harm or likelihood of experiencing harm. And they also asked for a definition of, you know, what is gambling and what is gambling harm. And although we had those in our mind, we didn't—hadn't expressed them in the guidelines, so we now have tried to express them in the guidelines.

We really incorporated the feedback, both from the surveys and these focus groups, into the final product.

Next slide.

Yeah, and so all of that information is available. Most of it has actually been published or is in the process of being published. And certainly, there will be reference to that on the website that Matthew will talk about now.

So, I'll pass it back to you, Matthew.

(21:53)

(MY:) Thanks, David.

So yeah, so now what are the—kind of the end products?

So, as a scientific working group, we took all these inputs in, and we deliberated over them and kind of sifted through them and came up with a series of recommendations, and we worked and developed those recommendations about a year ago. And the recommendations are available in a forthcoming manuscript.

And then since that year, we've been working on taking those recommendations and turning them into usable products that people, such as yourself or those of you who are on the call, can use in your health promotion, harm reduction, responsible gambling activities.

So, I'm going to show you a little bit of those. I'll start off with the main poster, go through in detail, and then I'm going to take you on a little bit of a tour around the website.

And so, this is the main poster. And like I said, if you'd like to see a summary of our five years of work and all the information that David was talking about, this is the best place to start.

So, a little bit of a zoom in at the beginning, so like I said, you know, we have here, we have how much. Gamble no more than 1% of household income before tax per month. And as David indicated earlier, we went with percentage because our focus groups and other sources said that percentage would be taken more seriously.

Everybody's always heard the expression, you know, well, Bill Gates can afford to gamble with more money than I can and that's true, so percentage wise, but it came with a knowledge challenge, and that was that, you know, people aren't that adept at transforming a percentage annual income into what that means in terms of per month expenditure very easily, and so what we have here is we have a table here, and this table has a range of incomes and it's kind of like a bit of a cheat sheet to enable people to

quickly determine what that means for them. For example, somebody making a household income of \$70,000, that translates to about \$58 per month.

And then we have the “and” which is very important here. And the next piece is how often? Four days. Gamble no more than four days per month.

And then we have “and” again, and we have how many, and avoid regularly gambling in more than two types of games. So, with our apologies, with our focus groups, we also heard that people needed to have a little bit of guidance about what is meant by a type of game as well as what is meant by a harm. And so, we have some examples of types of games here described visually, the icons.

And we also have included in here a little bit of information describing how a game type does influence somebody’s ability—or can be a big factor that predicts an individual’s ability to adhere to the guidelines if that is their goal. And so, we say in here that fast-paced games involve quick and repeated betting might—if you engage in those games, you may find it more difficult to adhere to the guidelines. And slower games, like lottery tickets, make it easier to stick to those guidelines.

On the bottom part of the poster or the middle part of the poster, we have the results of the literature reviews that David talked about, which identify kind of three groups of people who were at high risk of gambling problems.

And so, the message that we eventually settled on here for this was—and I’ll just read it off because I can’t put it any better than this:

However, these limits may not be suitable for you. You should consider gambling less than these guidelines recommend or not at all if you experience problems from alcohol, cannabis or other drug use; experience problems with anxiety or depression; or have a family history of problems with gambling.

And then the bottom of the poster, we have a few safer gambling tips, which are tips that came both from a review of the literature as well as focus groups. And we also have some information about describing what the negative consequences or harms are that are related to gambling.

A lot of our focus group participants reported that the harm that people think about is problem gambling, but really problem gambling, as many of you know, is really a constellation of a bunch of different harms that arise to kind of a clinical level that is then defined by a clinician or by an instrument. But really, it’s really just a group of harms that come together. And so, people were unclear what those harms meant, and so this comes from the Victoria taxonomy, as David described earlier, and these are relationship conflicts—financial conflicts, relationship conflicts, emotional distress and health problems.

And then finally, at the very end here, we have—this came out from the meta-analysis conducted by Dr. Youssef Allami, and it really was that another big predictor of problematic gambling was the reasons for gambling. And if somebody is gambling to escape problems, they’re more likely to experience harms from gambling.

And then there’s just some information at the bottom of this poster that describes where somebody can seek help if they’re looking for it.

(27:56)

So, that's the main poster, and I'm going to now bring us to the website. So, I'm going to just ask my partner in crime here, David, can you see the website and get a—okay, perfect.

So, this is our new website. Many of you may have had an opportunity to take a look at this before, but it's now available to the public in both English and in French. And what you can see here is that on the—there's—it's at gamblingguidelines.ca, and a lot of the information that we've described here are available here for you.

So, under here, we have "What Are the Guidelines?" This gives a description of what the guidelines are in the text, as well as a link to the poster.

Also available on the site is a whole series of posters. So, we also have harms from gambling, so this is a poster that describes—this is web text that describes the harms from gambling, but then we also have here a poster that you can access that describes the harms that we already talked through, but in a bit more of a visually appealing manner, and something that can be printed off, and shared.

We also have people at greater risk of gambling harms, and so this is the result of the meta-analysis published in *The Journal of Addiction* that David was talking about, and so we have a bit of a description here about how some people may be at a bit greater risk of gambling harms than others. And then we also have a poster, and that poster is also in a more visually appealing format and can be printed, and so these are here for your use.

We have another section here, types of gambling, so this really describes in a little bit more detail how some types of gambling, because of the nature of how quick and fast-paced and continuous they are, may make it more difficult for somebody to adhere to the guidelines. This description is included here, and we have a poster that describes this here, again, for your download, and it describes this clearly.

These posters have been focused group tested in both French and English and are there to be able to be used. We have a site here Safer Gambling Tips, and so this is where these are.

Now, I'm gonna come back to this in a second, but we also have another drop-down box here that includes resources. So, under these resources, we have everything I showed you, but we also have a report right here, so this is a report describing a lot of what David had laid out to you in the section he talked about, and so this is really the report that you can use to really kind of learn a little bit about some of the methods that were used to develop the guidelines.

(31:07)

And then all of the other posters that I showed you earlier on can be found here as well. We also have the PowerPoint presentation that David and I are presenting here today is also available in the resource section in both French and English.

We are in the midst of developing, it's very close to coming out, a risk assessment tool that asks people visiting the site a few questions about their gambling and gives them feedback based on the risk curves that we produced for the Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines.

We have another poster here that shows a little bit about the project background, so I won't bother going into it right now because we've described that to you in our presentation, but I will show you here, this is the science behind the guidelines, so this page here describes all of the different research

projects that were done to develop the guidelines and the peer reviewed publications that have emerged as a result of that, of those research projects. So, we have the original research protocol is available here.

We have a few papers that have been submitted for publication, so are not available quite yet. These are available upon request. And then we have others that have been published in the academic literature.

And then finally, I'm gonna go back around here which is promoting the guidelines. So, we do know that many of you are probably going to be interested in how you can use these in your work, and we do have—so promoting the Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines.

There's a whole description here of how you might be able to go about doing it. This ranges anywhere from just taking materials straight off the website and sending them out and what kind of restrictions there are on them, and there is not many. We invite you to do this.

This was—the whole purpose of this project was to get these materials in the hands of people such as yourself so that they can have an impact on the health of Canadians and other people throughout the world who gamble.

There're also opportunities to co-brand the guidelines, and so this is where if you'd like to print off—if you'd like to create a copy of the posters but put your logo on them as an organization that that is something certainly that we welcome. And we've actually set up a way of being able to do this.

(33:51)

There is copyright information here, so there are ways if you'd like to print off multiple copies of the report or the brochures for distribution, we welcome you to do that. We just ask that you let us know and maybe sometimes check with us.

The critical thing that we want here is for people to use them. But as a co-chair of the scientific committee, along with David, we also need to make sure that the integrity of the guidelines stays solid, and that means that as people kind of reproduce them or adapt them, for example, if somebody wanted to remove one of the guidelines, they come as a set of three, we would not permit that. So, we are keeping a little bit of control on it just so that the guidelines will maintain their integrity. And we have an application for copyright permission here.

So that's that, and I think I will just skip to the end here and hand it off to Bryce who can kind of answer questions or anything like that.

You can find everything I talked about at gambling@ccsa or gamblingguidelines.ca.

Thank you.

(BB:) All right. Well, thank you to both Matthew and David for their presentation and for sharing the website.

We do have a few questions coming in at this moment, so I'll do my best to read through those.

So, first question is from Erica Adams.

And a few more questions are rolling in, so I might have to just scroll back up.

I'm curious about the use of "problem" to describe one's relationship with gambling, i.e. problem gambling. I'm wondering if that can be stigmatizing for the individual experiencing harms? Why not just use language that puts a person first, such as "individuals experiencing harms"? We have moved away from using terms like "problem drinker" or "problem drinking" when it comes to alcohol.

So maybe I would direct that question just to you, Matthew. You're on mute, but maybe the next one, I'll direct to you, David.

(MY:) Yeah, I think I couldn't agree more. And I think that I'd have to take a look back to see whether or not we've been very careful throughout all the products to not talk about a problem gambler or even a gambler, but sometimes we do talk about problem gambling, so maybe like I'd need to—I need to pause for a second and think, you know, maybe, you know, that might be worth reconsidering as well.

(36:44)

I don't know, David, if you have any thoughts about that. But I will say to—is it Erica or Eric? Yeah, Erica. I thank you for the comment, and we tried to be very mindful of that in this, so yeah.

{DH:} Yeah, you know, I think we do use the term like "individuals experiencing problems," and yeah, I mean, I don't disagree with, you know, maybe "harms" might be a better choice of that. I mean, I think we did try to put individuals first. And hopefully we didn't err in that in any place unintentionally, but we did use the word "problems"—"individuals experiencing problems"—for sure.

(BB:) Well, thanks to both of you for that response.

So, the next question is from, excuse me if I get the pronunciation incorrect, but Duncou. This is great. "Will you translate this into other languages for other populations at risk who are not English- or French-speaking? And when might this be available? And do the guidelines apply to other cultural groups in the data used?" So maybe I would give that to you, David, just to start with.

{DH:} Yeah, so this project, you know, we've sort of fulfilled the mandate of this project and the funding for this project, so we're really keeping our fingers crossed and actively promoting other groups to kind of pick it up and kind of take it to the next level, both in terms of dissemination and further development. So, the short answer is we are not planning to translate this into other languages for this purpose. And we would encourage people to do that.

And similarly, with, you know, looking at the relevance to other cultural groups. We did some initial consultations with Indigenous individuals to sort of understand the acceptability and the relevance of guidelines with that group, and we would really like other groups to do the same. And similarly, we certainly had been approached by individuals in other countries and other cultures that would like to replicate our methods using their own data, and we would be very supportive and actively help people to do that as well.

So, short answer is we're at the end of the funding for this project, but we would like to promote others to do additional work.

(BB:) Thanks, David. And, Matthew, did you want to add anything to David's response?

(MY:) No, I think David summarized it all. It would be great to replicate among different cultural groups. I mean, you know, most of the surveys were in kind of more Western, more kind of slightly more wealthy, privileged countries, so there would be some value in seeing whether or not these results generalize to other nations at least, and—I mean, within there, we do have a certain amount of diversity, as you would expect within the population, but it would be a great next step. I agree with David wholeheartedly.

(40:16)

(BB:) And, Matthew, maybe just to put a point on it for people who are in a position to, if any one of the participants is interested in distributing this in a different language, they would be in a position to seek permissions from us to do that type of translation. That would be open to any of the participants who are on the call today. Is that correct?

(MY:) Absolutely, yes, that would be fantastic. We would very much support that and is well within kind of the copyright—we've structured the copyright section not to be restrictive but to be as open as possible while still maintaining the integrity of the guidelines, so we'd want to, as a scientific group make sure that in any way we can that the translations still adhere to the basic science behind the guidelines, but we would encourage wholeheartedly people to translate and to make use of these guidelines.

(BB:) Absolutely. So, the next question comes from Richard L. "Your emphasis on the 'and' separating the three parts of the guidelines is important. Do you predict a tendency for gamblers to try to pick up and choose among the three guidelines to follow just one?"

{DH:) I love that question because I think it's a very important question and something that I would love to delve into in much more detail. I mean, think about your reaction to the healthy eating guidelines? It's like, okay, I do not so bad with fruits and vegetables. Maybe I eat too much meat. You kind of, you know, think about how they apply, and in some ways, it guides your decisions and your behaviour. I think we need to learn more about that process. And, you know, absolutely, some people will, you know, adhere very strictly to the guidelines and others will kind of use it as, well, a guideline, not a rule. And I would really like us to understand better that, which would of course then help us to do better promotion of these guidelines.

(BB:) Absolutely. And then thanks again for both of those responses. So, comment and a question from Debbie Curtis from Newfoundland. "Great work. Thank you for this presentation. Are there any plans to distribute the promotional materials widely to media or places such as casinos or other establishments? Or would you see this the role of regional health promotions or prevention teams?" So again, maybe some of the participants who are joining us today, so I guess some of those promotional opportunities that you see. So maybe I'll direct that to you, Matthew, this time.

(MY:) Yeah, like David said, the mandate of this project has come to an end, so we're putting this out into the world, and it is our hope that folks such as yourself will be able to use these products in their work and get this disseminated.

(BB:) That's great. And so again, encouragement to all the participants who are here today, if you have an opportunity to spread these out or embed them or again, I believe there are social media promotion materials that are available here and to be downloaded new.

(MY:) Oh yes, I totally missed that, Bryce. There's also social media things on the website as well, which I forgot. My apologies. But there's social media resources for Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook, ways to disseminate the guideline, so yeah thank you for reminding me.

(BB:) No problem. So, the next question, and again, my apologies if I mispronounce, Midanik S.

(44:03)

"Can you please provide some insight into the rationale of using a percentage of overall household income rather than a percentage of discretionary income (Income remaining after living costs are taken into account)?"

And maybe, David, I'd ask you to answer that question first.

(DH:) Yes, basically, you know, we needed to rely on the data that were available, and the data in all of these surveys tends to ask about gross income, or sorry—yeah, gross income. And so that's—you know, so we needed to, you know, basically develop the guidelines with, you know, that information. So, we didn't have information about discretionary income.

And we could have, you know, calculated, estimated it, I guess, but that would take us a little bit further from the data that we had, and also would then even further complicate peoples' ability to figure out for themselves what that involved. So, I think it would be the more relevant variable but not practical at this point.

(MY:) And it would be challenging just defining what discretionary income is. You can imagine a whole research project based on that alone. Household income is something that is fairly fixed, well, not fixed but is knowable, and knowable with more certainty than disposable income.

(BB:) Thank you, again, for those responses. And the next question comes in from Giselle Maisonneuve.

"Can you clarify if copyright permission is needed if our intent is to simply put links to CCSA's website and to LRGG posters/brochures on our website under responsible gambling resources?" So again, just a question about specific permissions that are needed.

(MY:) So, I can answer you right there that no, you won't need to seek copyright permission for that. The only time copyright permission would be required is if you're going to print off and disseminate a very large amount of documents, or if you're going to alter them in any way or include them in textbooks or things like that. So, no. But on the website under "Promoting the LRGGs" it describes that with great clarity, and so you shouldn't have any problem. But no, like, any kind of sharing of these resources untouched, unmodified, doesn't require any copyright permissions. Share them at your leisure and we encourage you to do so.

(BB:) Yeah, absolutely. So, thank you for that question. And again, a very important one just because I think part of this initial sharing of the guidelines and, you know, I think you made it clear, both of you, a number of times, just that encouraging people to take this and use it and spread it far and wide, so just reinforcing that message. So, thanks for the question, Giselle.

And the next question is from Carly Sacco. "For the third guideline—which in brackets—avoid regularly gambling at more than two types of games, I assume regular would be based on monthly?" So maybe I'll hand that question to David just to take a crack at it.

(47:31)

(DH:) Yeah. Hi Carly. So yeah, basically, again, the data we have for most of the surveys were monthly estimates, so yeah, regular would mean based on monthly information.

(BB:) Excellent. And we still do have a little bit more time for more questions, so if you're worried that we can't squeeze your question in, we do have time, so again if there are a few more questions that people have and wanted to drop those in the chat, I think we should be able to get to those.

The next question is from, and again apologies for pronunciation if I get it wrong, Jussi Palamaki. "Since the guidelines are based on data collected from multiple countries, can we assume the guidelines are equally suitable for those countries from which the data was collected? Or is there some region for which the guidelines are 'most suitable for'?"

(MY:) So yeah, we believe that given what we had seen with the risk curves and the kind of the thresholds that emerged, we put out there that we believe that these guidelines are pretty similar at least across the nations that took part in this survey. We also understand that there are some countries that would feel a little bit maybe nervous putting these guidelines out without testing them on the citizens of their country. We appreciate that. Some may not feel that's necessary and some will. Regardless, that's a choice that you will need to make, and we'll support you in that. So, I don't know, David, do you have anything else to add to that?

(DH:) Yeah, no, I think that's the answer I would give. You know, the validation information that we got through the focus groups and the survey, that was all based on Canadian samples, so, you know, whether the guidelines would be equally acceptable or understandable in other countries, you know, is work that probably should be done. But, you know, a best guess is the actual quantitative limits would seem to apply. And then how they're communicated, of course, there would be nuances in different jurisdictions. There were nuances between our English and French versions as well, so that would be totally expected.

(BB:) Excellent. The next question that we have is from David Taylor. "So now that the guidelines are being promoted, are there plans to evaluate the impact they have?" And maybe I'd just pass this one to Matthew to start.

(MY:) That's a really good question, and we've talked a lot about it. We're putting the guidelines out, and like I said, the mandate of the project has ended and so has the funding. If there are groups or researchers or people who are interested in acquiring funding to evaluate the guidelines, we would be very interested in collaborating, participating, assisting whatever it is that you or others would be interested in doing. But unfortunately, right now, we don't have the resources to mount any kind of evaluation.

(BB:) Excellent. So, then the last question that I have is, "I'm interested in making this available in different languages for our First Nations people, so who do I reach out to on this forum?" So, an excellent question just in terms of—so if someone does want to adapt, you know, how exactly do they do that? And maybe I'll direct that to Matthew.

(51:16)

(MY:) Yeah, so the first thing you do is go to the website and go to “Promoting the Guidelines,” and it does have some description there about what you would do. If you were interested in adapting them or in translating them, there’s a request form. It’s just a copy of a request form. Fill it out. And, you know, we have a group of people at CCSA who respond to these requests. You should hear from somebody very quickly.

And they’ll kind of—then you’ll have an in-person contact that can kind of just—every one of these requests, there’s going to be a little bit individual and custom, so once the person reaches out to you, they can discuss the details of how to go about doing it. But certainly, you know, we do not want to put up any walls or barriers to doing so. We’ll assist you in any way we can.

(BB:) Excellent. And we did have one more question just came in, from Carly Sacco, and I might add my own selfishly, add a question to Carly’s. So, “Will notification be sent out once the risk assessment tool becomes available?” And my own additional question will just be what are the plans for that self-assessment? So, what ideally will someone walk away with? So, maybe it makes sense to talk about people who are higher risk and are more moderate risk or lower risk?

What would they get out of the self-assessment? So again, maybe what’s that last screen? Or is there something they can print? Or are they potentially given some other types of other resources to look forward to?

(MY:) Yeah, so we are planning on sending out notification to the group when the self-assessment tool becomes available. It should be within the next few weeks. And the—what it really does is—the self-assessment tool essentially asks questions about how often or how much—how much one’s household income is, how much they—what kinds of games they play regularly, and then how much do they spend on those games in a typical month. And through that information, we’re able to calculate whether or not they gamble above or below what’s recommended by the Lower-Risk Gambling Guidelines.

And then based on the risk curves that we have, we’re able to tell the person that based on their gambling frequency, say, they’re at more than three times risk of gambling harm than somebody who doesn’t gamble very much, for example.

And these are from the tables that David was showing, so we just read it off the tables. And so it can personalize it to a fair extent. And to your question, Bryce, at the very end is a summary, which is a printable summary, that has that information for somebody.

(54:10)

We are not collecting data on this. It’s completely anonymous. It’s really just meant to be a tool to help people kind of just engage with the guidelines, understand the guidelines a little bit, and just see how their gambling compares to what is recommended in the guidelines. Again, anonymous. There’s no data being collected. It’s completely anonymous.

(BB:) Again, that’s very helpful. And appreciate that explanation, and I hope that helped as well, Carly, just in terms of knowing when that will become available. So that brings us to our last question.

(DH:) Can I just make a comment on that?

(BB:) Oh please, yeah.

(DH:) Just because it sort of cues me to remind me that, you know, I think a message that maybe we haven't communicated as well is, you know, most of the presentation and the discussion has really been focused on these as educational tools and the individual player, the individual consumer, and that is an important role.

That's not in and of itself gonna, you know, eliminate gambling-related harms. You know, it plays an important role, but other initiatives are as important, more important in minimizing the harms associated with gambling.

And these guidelines can also be helpful, and those initiatives as well, so imagine, you know, you go onto an online gambling site, and your pattern of gambling is higher than these guidelines, and you get an alert to let you know that there are guidelines and you're exceeding the guidelines, so it's not an individual educational strategy in the same sense that we have been describing, but it's a way that the guidelines can be useful.

Or when people are asked to set limits with their guidelines, you know, maybe this information should be the default or available for people to inform their decision-making around gambling.

So, I really would encourage people to kind of think creatively and broadly on the role of the guidelines, as well as, you know, putting posters up beside slot machines and, you know, some of the more traditional ways that we disseminate educational information. It's good solid information, but I think it can be useful in lots of different ways.

(MY:) And maybe just to add to that, David, too is, you know, I've done a fair amount of work in the epidemiology of substance use as well, and, you know, one of the things we saw the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines being used for is in population prevalent studies, just to understand how many people drink in excess of the Low-Risk Drinking Guidelines. This could be used as well with gambling too.

Right now, we measure problem gambling in a population, but we don't necessarily measure—have kind of a lower threshold measure of just how many people are gambling at lower-risk levels verses the levels that introduce some level of risk in them?

(57:15)

So, there are other things, yeah, like David has said, that these guidelines could be used for with some creativity among many of you who are on the line.

(BB:) No, that's excellent. And again, really helpful additional details about where this fits into again policies and programs and practices that, you know, are important. And again, this being just a part of all that more important work, in some cases, and very important work that this is.

So, I would like to thank both of you for speaking. I'd like to thank all the participants for their excellent questions and for sticking around.

You can contact the LRGG project team at gambling@ccsa.ca. So again, if you have some follow-up questions from the session and you wanted to email, please feel free to do so.

The presenters will stay on the line, so if you have maybe some specific questions that you wanted to field to them right now, you would have that opportunity, so just stick around. And as people begin to exit, we'll end the formal session and end recording.

But again, if there was something specific about you wanted to do this to use the gambling guidelines where you are, and again, if you wanted to bring those specific questions, you're welcome to do so. So, the presenters will stick around for a few minutes. But with that, we'll sign off.

And again, thanks, everybody, for joining us today. And, you know, have some "congratulations" coming in on the comments. And I would second those. Congratulations on this excellent work. And thanks so much for the webinar.

(DH:) Thank you, everybody.

(MY:) Thank you.

(58:55)