



REACHING NEW HEIGHTS

ONTARIO PROBLEM GAMBLING RESEARCH CENTRE

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ANNUAL REPORT

In nine years the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre has funded more than 100 major research projects and supported close to 50 graduate students. The contribution of these funded investigators and students to our understanding of problem gambling has been noteworthy. The impact of this contribution is felt worldwide and will continue to grow.



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The challenge for the current board is to build on the legacy of past OPGRC success in a manner that will enable success to be sustained in the future.



Lynda D. Hessey

BOARD CHAIR



We are now standing at a critical juncture in the journey of OPGRC. At this point, we can look back at the legacy and accomplishments

of the past and also look forward at the opportunities, possibilities and challenges of the future. Under the board's leadership, the Centre will continue to evolve by developing its capabilities and creating a path for sustainable success in the future. The strengths of the past will need to be woven into the fabric of possibilities of the future.

The OPGRC was established in 2000 as part of the Problem Gambling Strategy of the provincial government. The founding board was charged with the challenge of operationalizing a vision for an arm's-length funding agency for problem gambling research. There was no roadmap or template to follow. Substantial effort was required to launch the startup organization. Beyond this, a high level of ongoing commitment was needed to develop a credible funding agency dedicated to generating knowledge through research to contribute to the reduction of harm from problem gambling.

The founding board hired a CEO to provide leadership and management skills to make the Centre operational. An office was established and a small group of staff was hired to support the core business. During those foundational years, highly credible research review processes and practices were established. This accomplishment

was supported by the assistance of very capable research consultants and international peer reviewers who were contracted by the Centre.

The primary goal was to develop a research capacity in the field of problem gambling. Research awards were structured by levels to support a full continuum of research activities: conferences, pilot projects, mid-stage start-up funds, support for in depth inquiry, knowledge transfer and studentships. In addition, knowledge transfer was enabled by a comprehensive range of initiatives: bibliography and literature search engines, an inventory of instruments and interventions and searchable summaries of funded research.

To strengthen these functions, staff engaged in providing ongoing support to researchers, and facilitated productive dialogue between researchers and end users. During this period, valuable relationships established with stakeholders paved the way for the development of collaborative research initiatives as well as national and international partnerships.

While building the foundation of the Centre, the board struggled with inconsistencies in the flow of funding. The full realization of a robust research agenda was constrained by this pattern of funding. The board wisely responded by embarking on an initiative to secure a more predictable flow of funding. This goal was successfully achieved in 2005-06 and was a watershed point for the Centre. The stable flow of funding enabled the research review and funding awards process to be strengthened and further refined.

Now that the Centre has been in operation for nine years, we are at a different point in the journey. We are facing a new reality with a new set of challenges, both recent and emerging.

In the past year, an internal re-organization at the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) moved responsibility for the Centre from a program area to the Health System Planning and Research Branch. The Centre is now better aligned with other research organizations funded by the MOHLTC. The Branch has worked with the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Problem Gambling to identify directed research priorities which have been operationalized through the Centre.

In addition to changes in its reporting relationship, the Centre was required to sign a three year agreement with the MOHLTC. As a result of government-wide emphasis on accountability and transparency, all organizations funded through the MOHLTC have similar agreements. The agreement clarifies roles and responsibilities of both the Ministry and the Centre. Most importantly, it provides stable funding for a three year period which enables the Centre to plan longer term.

Entering into a legal agreement with the Ministry heightened the board's awareness of its legal responsibilities and accountability. Responding to these changes in its external environment, the board committed to reviewing its internal governance process and practices. A board retreat was held in June 2008 to review the governance role of the OPGRC board and its relationship to management, and to identify any aspects of board governance capabilities

that needed developing or improving. This initiative was very significant and worthwhile.

In September 2008, an Ad Hoc Governance Committee was formed and standing committees of the board were assigned governance tasks related to their relative functions. The board and the CEO were actively engaged in reviewing relevant processes and practices, and in identifying areas for improvement. In support of building a culture of governance, four board members and the CEO attended the Governance Essentials Course for Not-For Profit Boards at Rotman School of Business, University of Toronto.

In April 2009, another board retreat was held to review the vision, mission, mandate and values of the organization, given changes in the external environment and the internal evolution of the organization. The purpose was to ensure alignment between the Centre's direction and its internal and external environment. To enable this discussion, views were shared on the future strategic directions of the OPGRC. Direction and suggestions on the content and process of a strategic planning process were also discussed.

Today, complex times are the new normal. This is a considerably different reality than what was faced by the founding board. Their imperative was the creation of a research funding agency focused on problem gambling. They successfully achieved their mission. Their legacy is a highly credible problem gambling research funding agency that is recognized nationally and internationally.

Now, the board of OPGRC must undertake a new mission. Over the past year, Ontario has faced an unprecedented downturn in its economic fortunes. As a result, Ontario has been officially classified as "a have not province." What implications will this have for research funding and what impact will it have on problem gambling? In this context, the MOHLTC is in the process of creating a comprehensive provincial mental health and addictions strategy. Problem gambling is included in this strategy. What will this mean for problem gambling research and for evidence based services?

The challenge for the current board is to build on the legacy of past OPGRC success in a manner that will enable success to be sustained in the future. In doing this, there is a need to adopt a whole enterprise perspective and to be more strategic in research investments.

Complex and challenging times require different skills, new approaches and shifts in thinking to produce measurable and quality outcomes. Meaningful collaboration, mutual respect and trust are required at all levels to successfully realize these goals. OPGRC has a competent board and staff team that are up to this endeavour.

Commitment, courage and hard work of volunteers and staff are the spirit and

ingredients that have built the Centre and will sustain it into the future. As a provincial board an unbelievable number of volunteer hours are contributed to the Centre from members in all parts of the province. Without a doubt, it is the joint effort of both the board and the staff working productively together that will realize the ultimate success of the Centre.

I would like to sincerely thank individually all the board members for their support to me as chair, as well as for their significant contributions to the work of the Centre over this very challenging year.

I would also like to recognize the leadership shown by committee chairs. In particular, I would like to thank them and their committees for their effort and diligence in grappling with complex issues.

Last but not least, I would like to thank our CEO Robert Simpson and the Centre staff for their ongoing support to me as chair, to the board, and to the Committees. Collectively, the board, the staff and the research experts that we contract represent an amazing team. Once again, I say thank you to everyone involved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynda D. Hessey
Board Chair

I would like to take this opportunity to share examples of how the Centre has become involved in the consolidation and application of research.



Robert J. Simpson

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



The Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre has now completed its ninth year of operation and has invested over \$28 million in research

awards and studentships. I would like to take this opportunity to share examples of how the Centre has become involved in the consolidation and application of research. The individual and collective return on these investments represents the most substantial contribution to world knowledge on gambling and problem gambling, in line with the Centre's mandate to increase our understanding of:

- 1) how problem gambling develops (etiology), the circumstances that contribute to the onset of problems (risk factors) and the circumstances that inhibit the onset of problems despite risk exposure (protective factors);
- 2) how to successfully intercept the processes by which problem gambling develops (prevention); and
- 3) how to successfully eliminate destructive gambling practices and remediate the associated harm (treatment).

As the Centre becomes an established player in the research field, it simultaneously moves toward capitalizing on the results of its investments to date. Links among studies become apparent as do new and innovative opportunities to build on progress realized – in short, opportunities for the consolidation and application of research become apparent. Having reflected on the Centre's evolution,

I would like to take this opportunity to share examples of how the Centre has become involved in the consolidation and application of research.

The first example goes to the core understanding or “governing images” of the problem gambling construct, where there has been a history of differing and often conflicting perspectives. This unfortunate reality has not only hampered communication among researchers, but also between researchers and “end-users” – those who read its reports and results. In addition, it has impeded the orderly study of problem gambling and the integration of results.

In response, the Centre is working toward the realization of an evidence-based Problem Gambling Framework that captures all key concepts and relationships. The development process includes involving leading researchers from the Canadian and world stages, and recognition that the result will be dynamic rather than static. The Framework includes three elements of problem gambling (impaired control, negative consequences, and persistence) and three elements of “direct risk” (erroneous cognitions, risk gambling practices, and preoccupation) as its foundations. It then identifies 14 “indirect risk factors” – those that contribute to the onset and maintenance of direct risks and problem gambling status. Seven are identified as “environmental conditions” and seven as “individual circumstances.” The goal of the Framework is to improve communication among researchers and thereby improve the compatibility of efforts and the ability to build on the findings of others.

The Framework, in turn, has given rise to a Prevention Model and a Treatment Model. In relation to the core governing images, each specifies the points of intervention, the outcomes to be pursued, and the most promising approaches by which these outcomes might be attained. The goal of these models is to support the systematic investigation of approaches to prevention and treatment and thereby improve positive impact over time. In addition, the models should facilitate communication among researchers and between researchers and “end-users” such as service providers, operators and regulators, policy makers and the public at large.

To date, progress with respect to the prevention of problem gambling has been hampered by incomplete information about its etiology and about risk and protective factors. This is because studies to date have been cross-sectional in nature, and only able to identify correlational and associative relationships rather than causal ones. This limitation can, in part, be addressed by looking at related fields such as problem drinking and smoking, and judiciously importing validated approaches. To assist with moving forward, the Prevention Model integrates “promising practices” from both sources as well as those extracted from available problem gambling research despite limitations.

The initial application of the prevention framework was a partnership with Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG).

This study tested a 9 minute animation designed to eliminate a key erroneous cognition among slots players, and to replace it with a correct understanding of how slot machines work. The animation then provided seven guidelines for slots players to remain problem-free by staying within their spending limits.

The research showed that the animation was able to change erroneous cognitions and to increase compliance with financial limits – the latter a necessary behavioural change for prevention to occur. Thus, the animation resource satisfied the “proof of principle” criterion by establishing that preventive impact could be realized. The behavioural impact decayed over a 30-day period, however, and redefined the challenge to extending impact rather than achieving it. A recently launched second study introduced two new manipulations. First, core message reminders are being placed on slot machines and automated banking machines (ABMs) in the test venue and, second, ABMs are being removed from the playing floor and placed away from the sights and sounds of play.

These studies lead the way to a new era of prevention research in that they:

- are aligned with a cohesive prevention model;
- employed behaviour change theories in the design of the intervention (the animation);
- identified a key behavioural change as the principal outcome variable;
- achieved progress in the initial endeavour (with the caveat that “more research was needed”);
- built on the initial gains with modifications to the intervention intended to extend positive impact.

These studies exemplify how prevention research should be approached. Continuing investments of this nature have strong potential to generate increasing numbers of validated prevention resources over the coming years. Moreover, they align with a view of prevention in which net impact is the product of many resources, each in effect, a “brick” in the prevention wall that reduces the rate of onset for problem gambling.

The Centre has also consolidated its approach to the treatment of problem gambling by concentrating efforts on three fronts:

- 1) the identification of problem gamblers in other help-seeking populations;
- 2) increasing the receptivity of problem gamblers to treatment; and
- 3) developing research-based treatment approaches and evaluating baseline outcomes.

Given the profound and often irreversible harm associated with problem gambling, it is fundamental that we engage and help as many as possible through treatment services. On the first front identified above, the Centre is investing in the identification of problem gamblers among primary care patients and the clients of financial counsellors and bankruptcy trustees. It has supported the development of case-finding instruments and protocols to help identify and provide feedback to problem gamblers in these groups. On the second front, it has supported the development and testing of an innovative “brief motivational enhancement” (BME) resource for problem gamblers so identified. The BME is intended to substantially increase the perceived benefits of treatment

while decreasing the perceived barriers and disadvantages. In so doing, it is intended to increase self-referrals to treatment and to improve retention.

The BME resource will be further tested in self-exclusion programs offered by gambling operators. Most self-excluding patrons are problem gamblers, yet do not refer themselves to treatment to help deal with this complex and often intransigent disorder. A separate evaluation of the BME will examine self-referral rates in this third sub-population.

The third front is predicated on the observation that success rates for problem gambling treatment are essentially unknown, and treatment completion rates appear to be low. Accordingly, the Centre is investing in a manualized program that uses a cognitive-motivational behavioural therapy (CMBT) clinical approach. In preliminary studies, CMBT has demonstrated the most successful outcome and retention rates to date and warrants more in-depth study. The program has been developed initially in a face-to-face format, with provisions for self-directed and internet-based formats to follow.

As the Centre and the field increasingly move toward improved communication, with renewed emphasis on the consolidation and application of results, we can look with optimism to even greater returns on research investments in the future. To better accommodate these shifts, the Centre has reorganized its operations and expanded by one staff member in order to provide even better support and opportunity to the field.

Many researchers and stakeholders in the problem gambling field have experienced and appreciated the services provided by Judith Glynn and Erika Veri Levett over the past nine years, and will be even more delighted with how they manage their new responsibilities in the future. Both have been fundamental to the success and reputation the Centre has enjoyed thus far and, as we continue to evolve in service quality, are keystones to our ongoing progress.

To this mix, we have added Jennifer Major, who has very capably moved into her role of providing research support services over the past year, and has already made her mark on the most recent directed research efforts of the Centre. In the Spring of 2009, we lost the services of Amy Aitcheson, who

moved to the greener pastures of the Perimeter Institute. We look forward to engaging her successor in the Fall of 2009 and launching our new web site and what we anticipate will be valuable new resources to all stakeholders. Finally, we welcome the addition of Kathy Miller to our staff contingent. Kathy has wonderful organizational abilities and a pleasant style that I am confident will satisfy our award recipients and other stakeholders over the coming years.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert I. Simpson
Chief Executive Officer



The accomplishments of the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre are the product of a highly integrated team of dedicated people.

The Centre is an incorporated non-profit organization governed by a Board of Directors consisting of nine elected and one ex-officio member. It is an arm's-length agency funded by the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lynda Hessey, R.N., B.Sc.N., M.Sc.

Virginia Carver, Ph.D.
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Ex-Officio

STAFF

Robert Simpson, M.A.
CEO

Judith Glynn, M.Sc.
Director, Grants Operations

Erika Veri Levett
Business Manager

Amy Perry, MLIS.
*Senior Manager,
Knowledge Translation*

Jennifer Major, Ph.D.
Research Officer

VISION

- A province whose residents are free from the consequences of problem gambling

MISSION

- To enhance our understanding of problem gambling and to strengthen treatment and prevention practices through research

MANDATE

- Invest in research on problem gambling
- Increase the capacity in Ontario to conduct research on problem gambling
- Disseminate research findings

A – RESEARCH AWARDS

LEVEL I	\$10,000.00
LEVEL II	\$42,000.00
LEVEL III (includes ups to 20% institutional overhead)	\$210,000.00
LEVEL IV (includes ups to 20% institutional overhead)	\$540,000.00

B – DIRECTED RESEARCH

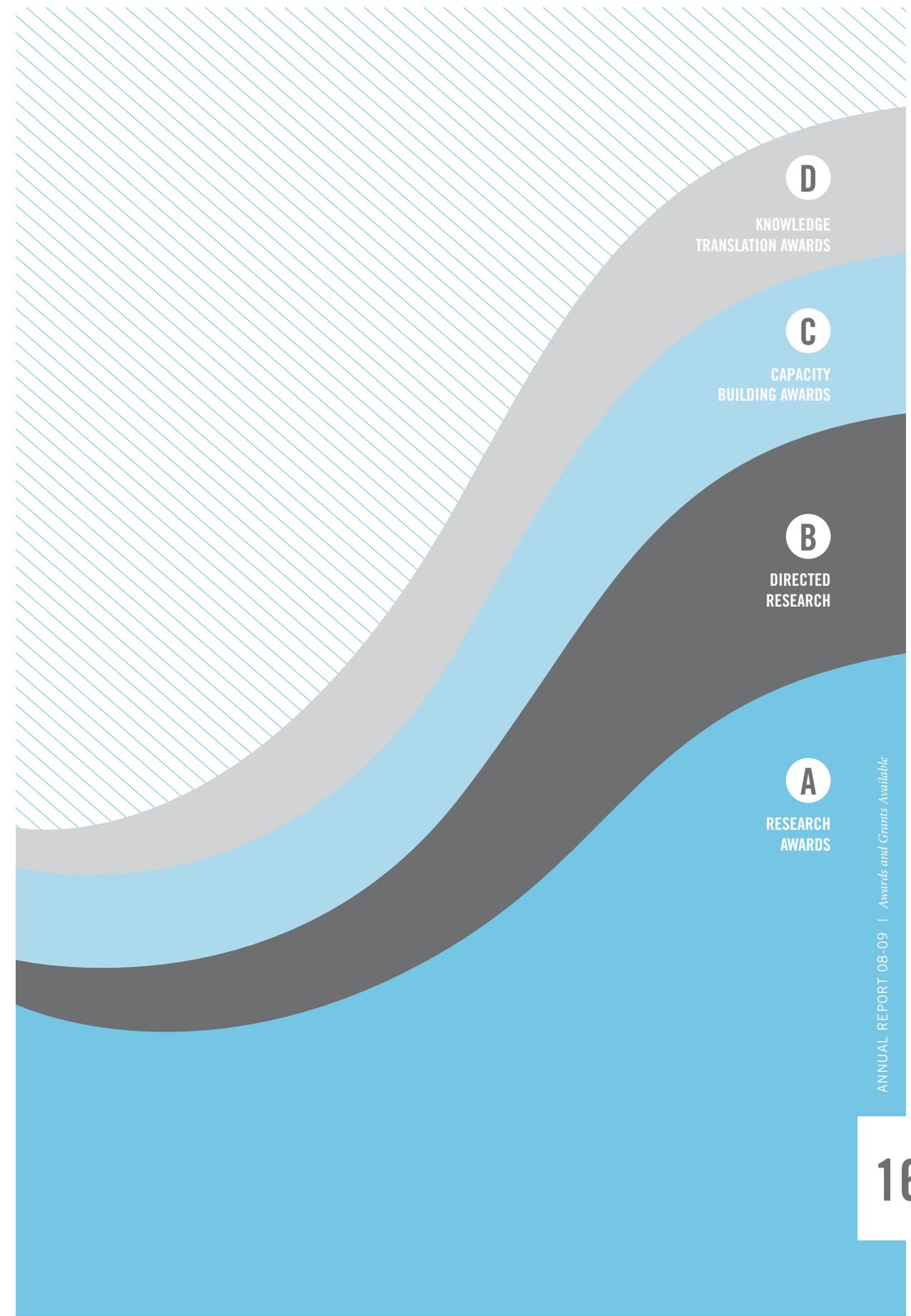
C – CAPACITY BUILDING AWARDS

CONFERENCE GRANT	\$2,000.00
MASTERS STUDENTSHIP (for up to 2 years)	\$17,500.00
DOCTORAL STUDENTSHIP (for up to 3 years)	\$20,000.00
G. RON FRISCH STUDENTSHIP (for up to 3 years)	\$20,000.00

D – KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AWARDS

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER GRANT	\$2,000.00
KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION GRANT	\$10,000.00

The amounts are the maximum awarded for each award type.



Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre Annual Report
Statement of Financial Activities, March 31, 2009

FINANCIAL STATEMENT FROM AUDITOR

REVENUE	\$4,008,723.00
GRANT DISBURSEMENTS	
Research Awards Level II, III & IV	\$1,614,079.00
Level I Awards	\$55,451.00
Graduate Studentships	\$390,800.00
Directed Research	\$993,140.00
Conference Grants	\$2,794.00
Research Review	\$30,157.00
Knowledge Translation Awards	\$53,940.00
Total Disbursements	\$3,140,361.00
NET REVENUE	\$868,362.00
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Administration	\$839,954.00
Research Dissemination	\$25,941.00
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	\$865,895.00

Note: Disbursement totals reflect projects funded in 2008-2009 and do not include ongoing commitments from previous fiscal years.

LEVEL I RESEARCH AWARDS

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Alex Guindon, M.A. & John Cunningham, Ph.D.	Crossing the Line: An in situ Exploration of Adherence to Planned Gambling Limits	University of Toronto	\$8,346.00
Mitch Callan, Ph.D.	Personal Relative Deprivation, Delay, Discounting, and Gambling	University of Western Ontario	\$9,717.00
Jeff Derevensky, Ph.D. & Rina Gupta, Ph.D.	Source Credibility in the Development of a Campaign for the Prevention of Youth Problem Gambling and High-Risk Behaviours: A Review of Our Current Knowledge	R&J Child Development Consultants	\$10,000.00
Lorne Tepperman, Ph.D.	The Inheritance of Problem Gambling: A Preliminary Examination of the Sociological Approach	University of Toronto	\$10,000.00
Karen Collins, Ph.D.	An Investigation into Audio's Impact on Gambling Behaviour: Annotated Literature Review and Research Plan Development	University of Waterloo	\$10,000.00
Margaret Beare, Ph.D.	Literature Analysis of the Relationship between Legal and Illegal Gaming	York University	\$10,000.00

LEVEL II RESEARCH AWARDS

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Ben Kuo, Ph.D.	Psychosocial Antecedents of Treatment-Seeking by In-Treatment Problem Gamblers	University of Windsor	\$42,000.00
Dwight Mazmanian, Ph.D.	The Comorbidity of Problem Gamblers in Northwestern Ontario	Lakehead University	\$36,054.84
Lia Nower, Ph.D.	Pathways Model Questionnaire Preparation for Development & Validation	Rutgers University	\$39,221.00
David Korn, MD, CAS & Cameron Norman, Ph.D.	Government and Industry Interconnectedness on Gambling: A Public Health Examination	University of Toronto	\$42,000.00
Harvey Marmurek, Ph.D.	Measures of Impaired Control in Gambling: A Comprehensive Analysis	University of Guelph	\$42,000.00
Tony Schellinck, Ph.D.	Development of Statements to be used in a Self Administered Gambling Risk Assessment Screen for Slots	Focal Research	\$42,000.00
Bonnie Lee, Ph.D.	A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial of Congruence Couple Therapy for Pathological Gambling	University of Lethbridge	\$41,907.00
Rod Lindsay, Ph.D.	I Bet I Remember: Exploring the Links Between Memory and Problem Gambling	Queens University	\$41,303.00
Catherine Classen, Ph.D. & Lisa Najavits, Ph.D.	A Pilot Study of Seeking Safety Therapy for Women in Pathological Gambling	Women's College Hospital	\$42,000.00
Randy Stinchfield, Ph.D.	Reliability, Validity and Classification Accuracy of New Signs and Symptoms of Pathological Gambling Generated by Windsor Ontario Pathological Gamblers and Family Members	University of Minnesota	\$24,000.00
David Nussbaum, Ph.D.	An Empirical Investigation of a Seven Component Psychobiological Decision – making Model for Problem Gambling	University of Toronto	\$42,000.00

LEVEL III RESEARCH AWARDS

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Martin Zack, M.D.	A Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Study of Brain Dopamine Function in Pathological Gamblers	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	\$210,000.00
James Kennedy, M.D.	Investigation of Signalling System Genes in Pathological Gambling	Centre for Addiction and Mental Health	\$196,609.00
Mike Dixon, Ph.D. & Kevin Harrigan, Ph.D.	Psychological Investigations of Wins, Losses and Near Misses in Problem Gambling	University of Waterloo	\$134,133.00

LEVEL IV RESEARCH AWARDS

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
John Stead, Ph.D.	Genetic Analysis of the Endophenotypes of Impulsivity and Reward Dependence in Pathological Gambling	Carleton University	\$538,549.00
Lia Nower, Ph.D.	Validating the Pathways Model Questionnaire	Rutgers University	\$536,772.00

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND LONG TERM CARE

The following directed research projects were undertaken for the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care (MOHLTC) on behalf of the Inter-Ministerial Problem Gambling Committee. They include four topics received directly from the Ministry, and three partnership projects to develop provincial resources in conjunction with the Ministry of Health Promotion (MHP), Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG), and the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). Ministry-directed research projects for funding year 2008-09 total \$479,118.00, which represents \$389,118.00 from the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre and \$90,000.00 from partnerships with AGCO and OLG.

FILE I – INTERNET THERAPY FOR PROBLEM GAMBLING: A LITERATURE REVIEW AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

Sally Monaghan, Ph.D., Alex Blaszczyński, Ph.D. **\$10,000.00**

On November 1, 2008 the Centre issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a Level I Research Award to conduct a review of the literature and environmental scan to answer the following preliminary questions:

- Are there Internet-based counselling models with measured outcomes? If so, what are the results?
- Have outcomes been compared between face-to-face and Internet-based formats?
- What is the experience in web-based counselling models regarding recruitment and retention?
- Are there Internet-based counselling models that offer variations designed specifically to address problem severity or subtypes of the disorder/problem? If so, how are clients assessed and assigned?
- Are there Internet-based counselling models that offer both counsellor-assisted and self-directed formats? If so, what are the lessons to be learned from them?

FILE II – GAMBLING AND PROBLEM GAMBLING IN ETHNO-CULTURAL COMMUNITIES

Matthew Young, Ph.D. **\$31,350.00**

In response to the research questions:

- What is the prevalence of problem gambling in ethno-cultural communities?
- Are there communities that are at higher risk than others?
- What is most effective for prevention and treatment in those communities?

On November 1, 2008 the Centre issued a request for proposals (RFP) for a Level II Research Award, to conduct a fact finding study to:

- Review the current state of knowledge;
- Survey organizations and provincial programs that are funded for ethno-cultural prevention and treatment, as part of an environmental scan;
- Provide direction on what is or is not perceived as working for various ethno-cultural target groups and, in line with findings, recommend next steps.

FILE III – INTERNET GAMBLING AND YOUTH

PART A – PARENTS AS PARTNERS

Eric Meerkamper (Partner, DECODE), Jeffrey Derevensky, Ph.D. **\$42,000.00**

The Centre joined a national survey of parents of youth to determine their attitudes and behaviours toward youth gambling, and to explore their potential role as partners and influencers in youth gambling issues. "Parents as Partners," was being conducted by DECODE, a firm that deals with research, strategy, and innovation in the interests of assisting organizations in better understanding youth, young adults and young families.

DECODE completed a quantitative research component of 2,700 respondents for other provincial organizations: Nova Scotia Gaming Corporation, Saskatchewan Health, Alberta Liquor and Gaming Corporation, and the British Columbia Lottery Corporation. By joining this survey the Centre has added valuable Ontario data to the national sample, and made possible comparison across jurisdictions for the Ontario sample.

PART B – DECODING ONTARIO YOUTH & GAMBLING

Eric Meerkamper (Partner, DECODE), Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation **\$42,000.00**

Ontario obtained permission from DECODE and the Nova Scotia Gaming Foundation to replicate an on-line survey of youth to probe attitudes and behaviours for gambling in general and on-line gambling in particular. The Ontario study will build on a September 2008 study conducted by DECODE study on Nova Scotia Youth.

PART C – GAMBLING-THEMED TOYS AND LATER BEHAVIOUR AMONG YOUTH

Eric Meerkamper (Partner, DECODE) **No additional cost**

In response to the research questions:

- Do toys and novelty items promote gambling among youth? and;
- Is there a link between early exposure and behaviour later?

DECODE agreed to include questions probing this issue in the Ontario Youth Online Gambling Study described above. The investigation will be exploratory in nature, and will provide the basis for more extensive study of the topic in the future.

FILE IV – GAMBLING RISK ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENT FOR SLOTS

Tony Schellinck, Ph.D., Tracy Schrans, Focal Research Consultants Limited **\$42,000.00**

For the Ministry of Health Promotion, the Centre is working to support the conceptualization, development, and evaluation of programs and resources for the prevention of problem gambling among adolescents and adults. At present, no validated instruments exist to adequately assess either the risk of gambling harm or low levels of harm, hence, the Centre's investment in developing and validating instruments to assess risk status and low levels of harm among adults and youth. Such an instrument will allow the province to establish baseline measures to assist in resource planning, the design/evaluation of preventive interventions, and the monitoring of long term impact.

A Level II Research Award will support the quantitative evaluation of a new instrument under development designed for slots players. It should be noted that gambling risk is likely to be game-related and, since slots account for the highest problem rates in Ontario, this form of play has been selected for instrument development. Once validated, variants for other forms of gambling will be developed.

FILE V – EVALUATION OF MEASURES TO EXTEND THE BEHAVIOURAL IMPACT OF A PREVENTIVE ANIMATION FOR SLOTS PLAYERS

Michael Dixon, Ph.D., Kevin Harrigan, Ph.D., University of Waterloo **\$113,656.11**
Partnership Project with Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation

This study will test a revised version of an animated Educational Intervention that, in its initial testing, reduced the risk practice of "exceeding financial limits" among slots players. This project will test for enhanced initial impact from the animation, and will determine whether educational reinforcements (memory prompt stickers on machines and ATMs) and the removal of ATMs from the playing floor will extend the duration of short term impact. The study will be conducted at two slots facilities, Flamboro Downs and the Western Fair Raceway.

To date, the existing animation developed in partnership with OLG is the only prevention resource available backed by evidence of effectiveness, and organizations in 8 other provinces have licensed its use (in both French and English).

FILE VI – INCREASING CORRECT KNOWLEDGE AND BELIEFS ABOUT SLOT MACHINE STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Michael Dixon, Ph.D., and Kevin Harrigan, Ph.D., University of Waterloo **\$211,768.00**
Partnership Project with Alcohol and Gaming Commission Ontario (AGCO)

This study will develop educational animations to eliminate potential misinformation transmitted by the structural features of slot machines (further to the animated Educational Intervention for slots players developed with OLG in 2007-08)

Seven animations have been planned for this series, with three identified for initial development and testing in the current fiscal year. Each will be of 2-3 minutes duration and will address the operations and implications for play of: the stop button, near misses, and virtual reel mapping. The research project will develop the animations and evaluate their impact on samples of slots players.

ONTARIO PROBLEM GAMBLING RESEARCH CENTRE

The following research priorities were identified and approved as directed research by the Board of Directors.

DEVELOPING PROTOCOLS FOR USE OF THE NODS-CLIP TO SCREEN FOR GAMBLING PROBLEMS IN ONTARIO PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SETTINGS

Rachel Volberg, Ph.D., Matthew Young, Ph.D. **\$10,000.00**

In addition to the above projects directed by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, the Centre funded a follow-up component to a Ministry-directed two-part project from the previous year, to:

- a) Compare SOGS and CPGI with recommendation as to which is more beneficial for use by the Ontario Problem Gambling treatment system; and
- b) Identify/develop a screening questionnaire for use by allied professionals in Ontario for case-finding among other client populations.

Based on the findings of that two-part project, the investigators have received further funding to develop protocols for use of the NODS-CLIP to screen for gambling problems in Ontario primary health care settings.

REVIEW OF PREVENTION LITERATURE IN RELATION TO ALCOHOL, OTHER DRUG, AND GAMBLING PROBLEMS AMONG YOUTH

Robert Williams, Ph.D., Tim Stockwell, Ph.D. **\$10,000.00**

The investigator will conduct a systematic review of the literature regarding the prevention of gambling among populations 19 years of age and under, and the informed application of transferable principles from the literature regarding the prevention of alcohol and other drug problems in the same population. Of interest is English language peer-reviewed and grey literature documenting positive impact achieved by programs, resources, and policy measures undertaken to reduce the incidence of problems among young people. The review should identify principles, strategies, and approaches that have been shown to contribute to positive outcomes. Finally, the resulting report should outline an integrated Model for the Prevention of Gambling Problems among Youth which applies the findings and conclusions of the review.

09 | CAPACITY BUILDING AWARDS

CONFERENCE GRANT

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Lorne Tepperman, Ph.D.	Canadian Gaming Summit	University of Toronto	\$1,534.13
Alan Scoboria, Ph.D.	Discovery 2008 Conference	University of Windsor	\$1,278.89

MASTERS STUDENTSHIP

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Daniel Guttentag	Problem Gambling Among Ontario Casino Employees: Prevalence and Contributing Factors	University of Waterloo	\$17,500.00

DOCTORAL STUDENTSHIP

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Robyn Taylor, M.A.	Adolescent Gambling Relationship with Social and Emotional Competency, Internet Use, and Video Game Playing	University of Guelph	\$20,000.00
Kevin Gomes, M.A.	Client Characteristics that Predict Outcomes of Problem Gambling Treatment (G. Ron Frisch Studentship)	University of Windsor	\$25,000.00
Jennifer Reynolds, M.A.	Hospitals, Lotteries and the Public Good: A Systems Approach to Understanding the Benefits and Concerns.	University of Toronto	\$20,000.00

G. RON FRISCH STUDENTSHIP

In 2008, the Centre introduced the G. Ron Frisch Doctoral Studentship in Clinical Psychology. Named for the inaugural Chair of Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre, this award recognizes an outstanding Ontario student working on a doctoral dissertation in clinical psychology with a focus on problem gambling research.

This year, the Centre named Kevin Gomes from University of Windsor as the first recipient of this award. Kevin will receive a \$20,000.00 studentship and \$5,000.00 for expenses for each of three years of his study, for a total of up to \$75,000.00.

Treatment for problem gambling is generally thought to be effective, but many individuals undergoing treatment terminate before completion or relapse. As a result, research is required that examines the treatment process for factors which might predict treatment success in the form of abstinent behaviour and treatment completion. Building on the program of research begun during his Masters, Kevin's Ph.D. dissertation will explore various client characteristics and how they facilitate or hinder the treatment process.

10 | KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION AWARDS

KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Bill Bogart, B.A., LL.B., LL.M.	What are the odds? Regulating Excessive Consumption and Problem Gambling	University of Windsor	\$10,000.00

KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	PROJECT TITLE	SPONSORING ORGANIZATION	AMOUNT AWARDED
Bonnie Lee, Ph.D.	The Transcription of a Single Case Study of Congruence Couple Therapy for the Development of Training Vignettes and Exercises	University of Lethbridge	\$2,000.00
Dan Rubenstein, CA, M.A.	Next Steps: Accountability and Social Responsibility in Ontario's Legal Gambling Regime	Scales of Justice	\$2,000.00

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OPGRC Research Priorities for fiscal year 2008-2009
(in ranked order)

1

Describe the motivating factors and techniques used by problem gamblers who cut back or quit gambling without formal treatment.

2

Develop and evaluate new treatment protocols intended to improve outcomes.

3

Develop and evaluate theory-based programs and resources to prevent the onset of problem gambling among specified target groups, with particular emphasis on electronic forms of gambling.

4

Explore or describe the interaction between the gambler and the context/environment in which gambling occurs, and the combined effect on the onset/progression of problem gambling.

5

Investigate the mechanisms or processes by which the adoption of risk practices and cognitions and/or impaired control occurs and is maintained.

6

Undertake research initiatives that build on existing studies funded by OPGRC by investigating next significant steps in the related agenda, or that seek to replicate studies to potentially strengthen the empirical base for the findings.

ONTARIO PROBLEM GAMBLING RESEARCH CENTRE

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