Reducing Harms from Gambling through Community Engagement

*A **G**ambling **R**esearch **E**xchange **O**ntario **BET**: System Impact Support funded project*

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Background

- April Board of Health report consultation revealed concerns from community partners

- Lack of local awareness and prevention information on the harms related to gambling and the treatment services available

- Limited local information on the scope of the problem with high risk groups

- Community engagement (CE) is recognized as a best practice in public health interventions

- CE can have a positive impact on a range of health outcomes

- Effective in reaching 'hard to reach' groups via intermediaries supporting vulnerable populations

Project Goals

✓ Improve the wellbeing of populations at higher risk of harms from gambling by strengthening outreach and increasing awareness and prevention messages of the harms from gambling in those communities.

✓ Embed gambling harm reduction strategies in existing community services and mental health, substance use and addiction initiatives supporting vulnerable populations in Ottawa.

Strategies

- **Leveraging** the expertise and resources of new Ottawa Gambling Harm Prevention Network

- **Consultations** with treatment partner groups

- **Engagement** with high-risk groups through intermediaries

- **Resource development** based on new knowledge from community engagement

- **Integration** of gambling awareness and prevention information into establish mental health, substance use and addiction initiatives

Lessons learned so far
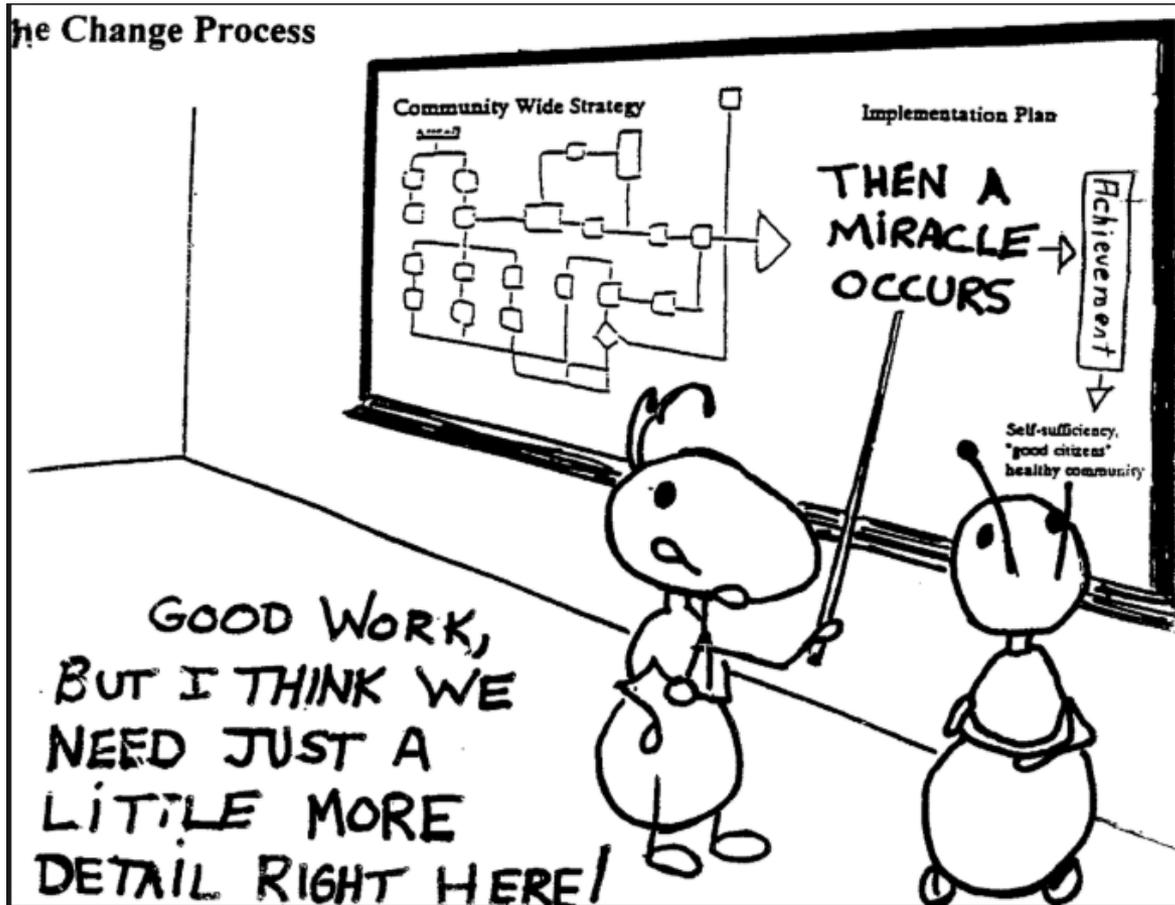
Potential Outcomes

- Consultations with priority groups and key stakeholders provides a robust understanding of what is needed to support high risk populations

- Consultations inform future planning of the OGHPN

- Improved awareness among OPH programs, community partners and service providers of harms related to gambling

- New community agencies involved in sharing key messages

- Increase in community partners engaged in reducing harms from gambling

- Increased knowledge about gambling treatment and support services by intermediaries supporting vulnerable populations