

Prevention and Education Review: Gambling-Related Harm

R E S E A R C H R E P O R T

2021

4.0 Indicated Measures

4.4 Self-Exclusion

Protocol

DESCRIPTION

The Prevention and Education review contributes to guiding the development of a collective and clear prevention plan, as set out in the National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms. The review is organised into three levels of prevention and education measures: Universal (for the benefit of the whole population), Selected (for the benefit of at-risk groups), and Indicated (for the benefit of at-risk individuals). Self-exclusion is included in the review as an indicated measure. It is used as a harm management tool for people who self-identify as at risk of or experiencing harm from gambling.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this section is to review evidence about the contribution of self-exclusion programmes to gambling harm prevention and education among people at risk of or experiencing gambling-related harm.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How effective is self-exclusion in the prevention of further gambling harm among people who are at-risk of or experiencing harm from gambling?
2. Are there any unintended negative consequences or outcomes of self-exclusion programmes for prevention and education about gambling related harm among at-risk individuals?
3. How might self-exclusion programmes be used to reduce harm from gambling as part of a collective prevention and education plan?

METHODOLOGY

Self-exclusion has been the subject of considerable research and several recent systematic reviews. Given the availability of high-quality systematic reviews, a knowledge synthesis will be undertaken following a narrative review approach. As Kastner et al. note, *"A knowledge synthesis summarises all pertinent studies on a specific question, can improve the understanding of inconsistencies in diverse evidence, and can define future research agendas."*¹, p.2 The narrative review approach allows quantitative and qualitative evidence, and grey literature to be reviewed but does not generate new theories or merge data. A strength is that it considers contextual factors related to the evidence.² The focus is more on gathering relevant information than on rigorous quality assessment.³ The findings of narrative reviews are often well suited to informing policy making decisions and intervention design applications.¹

SEARCH STRATEGY

An initial search will identify systematic reviews of self-exclusion that have been conducted within the past ten years, from 2010 onward. The search will include the relevant databases and grey literature.

The databases to be searched include:

- Scopus
- Web of Science
- PubMed
- PsycINFO
- CINAHL
- ERIC

Grey literature searches will include:

- [Geo Evidence Centre](#)
- [Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand Library](#)
- [GambleAware Research Publications](#)
- [Gambling Commission Research Library](#)
- [OpenGrey Grey Literature Repository](#)
- [WorldwideScience.org](#)
- [Ontario Public Health Library Association \(OPHLA\) Custom Search Engine for Canadian Public Health Information](#)
- [Social Care Online](#)
- Google, following best practices using Google for grey literature⁴

The search terms are “self-exclusion” or “voluntary exclusion” and “gambl*”, limited to reviews only.

Preliminary results show that there were six systematic reviews on self-exclusion (four of which are reviews of preventative measures that include self-exclusion), published between 2017 and 2019.

A second search will be conducted of new materials published from the date of the most recent review onward about self-exclusion related to prevention and education. The search will include the same databases, grey literature sources, and search terms used to identify the existing systematic review.

ANALYSIS PLAN

After removing duplicate and out-of-scope studies, the remaining self-exclusion studies and reports will be assessed for their applicability to gambling harm prevention and education. Specific areas to be examined are:

- Contextual factors (i.e., what works or does not work, for whom, and under what conditions).
- Whether any unintended consequences are reported;
- Any notable patterns in the relationship of self-exclusion and gambling harm prevention and education across studies;
- Whether recommendations or guidance are suggested for how the findings might be used; and
- Knowledge gaps in the evidence.

Findings will be reported in both narrative and tabular format.

DATA MANAGEMENT

The dataset will consist of citations for academic literature and grey literature reports. The data will be stored on a shared drive during the analysis phase because the information is not considered confidential. Upon completion of the review, it will be uploaded to the Greo Dataverse, where it can be shared with interested parties through open access.

PROJECT TIMELINE

ACTIVITY	DATE
Search 1 - Existing systematic reviews	July 2-6, 2020
Search 2 - Information published from 2019 onward	July 8-9, 2020
Removing duplicates and out of scope items	July 6-9, 2020
Data analysis	July 13-17, 2020
Writing	July 20-24, 2020
Draft report	July 27, 2020
Proof-reading and editing	July 27-31, 2020
Section finalised	July 31, 2020

REFERENCES

1. Kastner M, Antony J, Soobiah C, Straus SE, Tricco AC. Conceptual recommendations for selecting the most appropriate knowledge synthesis method to answer research questions related to complex evidence. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*. 2016;73:43-9.
2. Mays N, Pope C, Popay J. Systematically reviewing qualitative and quantitative evidence to inform management and policy-making in the health field. *Journal of Health Services Research & Policy*. 2005;10(1_suppl):6-20.
3. Kastner M, Tricco AC, Soobiah C, Lillie E, Perrier L, Horsley T, et al. What is the most appropriate knowledge synthesis method to conduct a review? Protocol for a scoping review. *BMC medical research methodology*. 2012;12:114-.
4. Bonato S. Google for grey literature. In: *Searching the grey literature: A handbook for searching reports, working papers, and other unpublished research*. London, UK: Rowman & Littlefield; 2018. p. 191-224.