

Help-seeking of problem gamblers: a narrative review

Johanna K. Loy¹, Barbara Braun¹, Bettina Grüne¹, Eva Samuelsson², Ludwig Kraus^{1, 2}

¹ *IFT Institut für Therapieforschung, Leopoldstraße 175, D-80804 Munich, Germany*

² *Centre for Social Research on Alcohol and Drugs (SoRAD), Stockholm University, SE – 106 91 Stockholm, Sweden*

ABSTRACT

Background: Research shows low rates of help-seeking among problem gamblers. Identifying reasons for and barriers to seeking help is essential for a better understanding of gamblers' treatment utilisation and thus for an improvement of help supply and an increase in help-seeking. The present study examines the proportion of gamblers taking up help in general – differentiated by varying types of help. Moreover, it focuses on reviewing the evidence relating to motivators for and barriers to seeking help by problem gamblers.

Method: The databases Medline, PsycInfo, and PubMed were searched for English and German-language studies published between 2000 and 2017. Furthermore relevant references of included studies were analysed. For a solid and in-depth analysis both, quantitative and qualitative studies were examined.

Results: In total, the review includes 29 studies. Results will contain a summary of help-seeking prevalence among gamblers. Furthermore, barriers to and motivators for help-seeking will be presented, including a comparison of help-seekers to non-help-seekers.

Conclusion: Help-seeking behaviour is – both in practice and in research – a topic of high importance. The narrative review will serve as a basis for deriving practical implications. This might be helpful in order to encourage gamblers to take up help.

Keywords: gambling, help-seeking, treatment, barriers, motives, formal/informal help