



NEWS RELEASE

MANITOBA GAMBLING RESEARCH PROGRAM TO BE LAUNCHING SOON

June 16, 2011 – Manitoba Lotteries has announced details of the Manitoba Gambling Research Program, which will be operational in November 2011. This program will support the development of high quality research that enables the evidence-based advancement of responsible gaming programs, and problem gambling prevention and treatment.

The program adds capacity to the extensive research already undertaken in Manitoba. A Research Council, consisting of community members and provincial gambling stakeholders, will provide oversight to program.

“One million dollars annually will support research through the council as part of our commitment to gambling research,” said the Honourable Steve Ashton, Minister responsible for Manitoba Lotteries. “The funding will allow a range of gambling related topics to be pursued, from advancing responsible gaming strategies to research that targets prevention and treatment to effectively respond to the needs of individuals and families with gambling problems.”

Starting in November 2011, grants will be available for researchers to pursue projects within the program’s research priority areas. There will also be directed projects designed to investigate specific questions, as identified by the Research Council. The program will foster studies to enhance and extend the responsible gaming initiatives that have been implemented in Manitoba to date.

The council will consist of community and academic representatives and will be strengthened by its inclusion of provincial stakeholders including the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, Manitoba Healthy Living, Youth & Seniors, Manitoba Gaming Control Commission and Manitoba Lotteries. The provincial gaming stakeholder organizations have extensive knowledge of the responsible gaming field and also work collaboratively with each other regarding responsible gaming and problem gambling programming.

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Linda Taylor was announced as Chairperson for the Research Council by Minister Ashton. Ms Taylor has a master's degree in sociology and has worked primarily in social services. She has served on a variety of boards including six years on the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Manitoba Complaints Committee. She was on the founding boards of Abinochi Mino-Ayawin at the Aboriginal Centre, the Manitoba Council of Administrative Tribunals, and the Women's Health Clinic where she was Chair for three years. Most recently she served as Chair of the License Suspension Appeal Board.

The structure of research agencies in other jurisdictions was studied in order to develop the Manitoba Gambling Research Program. Other models reviewed included the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre, the Alberta Gaming Research Institute and Gambling Research Australia, in addition to health-related research models such as the Manitoba Health Research Council. Consultation was also held with the Responsible Gambling Council (Toronto) and Factz Research.

The program will be financially supported and administered by Manitoba Lotteries.

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Backgrounder Attached

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Research Council Members

Linda Taylor
Chairperson

Elizabeth Stephenson
Manitoba Gaming Control Commission

David Hodgins, PhD
Academic Member

Yvonne Block
Addictions Foundation of Manitoba

Anastasia Sych-Yereniuk
Member

Tina Leclair
Manitoba Healthy Living, Youth & Seniors

Leah Gazan
Member

Susan Olynik
Manitoba Lotteries



BACKGROUND

MANITOBA GAMBLING RESEARCH PROGRAM

- The Manitoba Gambling Research Program will direct \$1 million annually towards Manitoba-based research on responsible gaming and problem gambling. The program will launch in November 2011.
- This program adds capacity to the already extensive research conducted in Manitoba and will support the development of high quality research that enables the evidence-based advancement of responsible gaming programs, and problem gambling prevention and treatment.
- A Research Council will oversee the program, following rigorous research standards. The Research Council will determine a strategic research plan so that overall research priorities are met.
- The Research Council will include an appointed independent chairperson and community members, academic representation, and gambling stakeholders including the Manitoba Gaming Control Commission; Manitoba Healthy Living, Youth & Seniors; Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and Manitoba Lotteries.
- The Program will have two streams:
 - **Research Grants:** provides academics the opportunity to pursue research projects that enhance understanding of topics within the program's research priority areas.
 - **Directed Research:** provides an opportunity for researchers to investigate specific questions, as identified by the Research Council.
- Research proposals and reports will be peer reviewed by independent researchers in the field to ensure quality.
- The program will be administered by Manitoba Lotteries. The Research Council will report to the Manitoba Lotteries Board.
- Structures of research agencies in other jurisdictions were studied in order to develop the Manitoba Gambling Research Program. They included the Ontario Problem Gambling Research Centre, the Alberta Gaming Research Institute, Gambling Research Australia as well as health-related research models such as the Manitoba Health Research Council. Consultation was held with the Responsible Gambling Council and with Factz Research.
- In 2009/10 Manitoba Lotteries contributed \$4.0 million to responsible gaming and problem gambling programs and research. This includes \$3.1 million provided to the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba for its problem gambling treatment and gambling awareness programs.