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A multilingual gambling information Web site

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The Electronic Journal of Gambling Issues: eGambling invites clinicians from around the world to tell our readers about their problem gambling treatment programs. To make a submission, please contact the editor at phil_lange@camh.net

Programme description

Our Prevention/Education for Problem Gambling Program was designed to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate problem gambling services to members of ethno-cultural communities in the Niagara region through a mix of approaches.

Our multilingual Web site at www.gamb-ling.com offers problem gambling information in 11 languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, Farsi, Hindi, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish and Urdu. It was launched on February 28, 2002, with a celebration to thank the cultural interpreter/translators, technical and program staff who designed and built the site.

The Web site's main page allows users to access information in any of the 11 languages. Subdued graphics allow for ease of communication in each language. For example, if you move the curser over "Portuguese" an icon in the shape of a ship's lifesaver displays the Info-Line telephone number and says "Ligue agora!" (Call now!). If you move the curser over, say, China – the word "Chinese" pops up on the map and the lifesaver icon offers the same "Call now!" message in Chinese.

The "Audio" option allows users to hear a four-minute explanation with basic

information about problem gambling in any of the 10 languages. The main page, where the language-choice menu is, allows users to go to a second page that offers more choices such as “What's problem gambling?,” “Do I have a problem?,” “Get help,” “Ethno-cultural resources,” “Library” and “What's the big problem with gambling?”

Following these links leads to further choices, for example, “Do I have a problem?” yields “Symptoms and signs,” “Ready for a thrill?” (lists the kinds of feelings that accompany gambling problems) and “Assessment tools.” The last choice offers the user the self-scored Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) Gambling Screen, which automatically replies with a recommendation, and the South Oaks Gambling Screen covering the DSM-IV criteria (not-automatically scored) and Gamblers Anonymous 20 questions. Many more information options also exist on other pages.

Our 24-hour gambling Info-Line 1-866-GAMB-SOS (1-866-4264-767) offers information and services in 10 languages (i.e., all of the above except English), both to gamblers and to their family and friends.

We offer public education and awareness training and/or presentations for settlement workers, services providers, the financial sector and ethno-cultural communities.

Philosophy of service

Our philosophy is to offer linguistic and culturally appropriate, multilingual services in prevention, education and other problem gambling services. In designing our Web site, we ruled out simple translations from English in favour of ensuring that culturally specific concepts and sensibilities were respected. For example, a piggy bank icon was originally proposed and then dropped because pigs are devalued or even taboo for many users who will access the site.

Linkages

We have strong links with four multicultural centres, ethno-cultural and ethno-racial community groups and service providers in the Niagara region. We also work with such services as the Niagara Alcohol and Drug Assessment Service to provide care for our clients who have other problems (e.g., concurrent disorders, alcoholism and drug addiction). We receive support from the Problem Gambling Multilingual Advisory Committee, composed of community members from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Impact

Three months after our Web site launch, we received about 44 users each day.

Article Categories:

- Service profile