

## BRITISH COLUMBIA ONLINE GAMBLING PREVALENCE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

	Recommendation	GPEB and BCLC Actions Underway
1.	<p>A deeper dive using such methods as online interviews or focus groups would provide a richer understanding of those in the Active Player group, who have higher rates of problem gambling and are more likely to experience harm from gambling than most other gamblers.</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>Specific profile information from this report will be used to inform programming for online prevention and clinical supports.</p> <hr/> <p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>BCLC began a number of initiatives in 2019 to develop a richer understanding of active player groups, including qualitative online focus groups with a segment of the population that is more likely to be classified as high-risk on the Problem Gambling Severity Index scale.</p> <p>In 2020, BCLC conducted online interviews with players to understand further what BCLC can do to reduce stigma and barriers associated with individuals receiving help for gambling-related concerns.</p> <p>In 2021, BCLC will continue to enhance and expand research to inform a deeper understanding of our players and how BCLC can best support their healthy play. A key area of focus is research to obtain a greater understanding of player-health needs related to sports betting. One way that BCLC will achieve this is through a commissioned third-party review of sports betting by the Canadian Responsible Gambling Association. The early 2021 study will support BCLC in gaining a deeper understanding of risks, current interventions and safeguards – and evidence of their effectiveness.</p>
2.	<p>Public education to clearly separate the regulated provincial site from other online gambling offerings should be considered. This will make it as easy as possible for those players who value the convenience and security of online gambling to distinguish</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>GPEB regularly responds to members of the public who have questions about online gambling sites. GPEB will continue to inform the public that BCLC’s PlayNow.com is the only regulated online commercial gambling website currently permitted in BC. GPEB will also continue to advise players in BC to use caution when playing on non-regulated gambling sites as these sites are not regulated or monitored by GPEB.</p>

	<p>between the provincial site and unregulated sites that are sometimes very aggressively promoted.</p>	<p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>BCLC has integrated this recommendation into marketing and communications considerations.</p> <p>In 2020, BCLC introduced a new tagline – “BC’s only legal gambling website” – into PlayNow.com marketing campaigns. BCLC’s external communications messaging has also shifted to note that PlayNow.com is B.C.’s only regulated online gambling website.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>The regulator should require, and the operator undertake, a commitment to use player data to identify those players most at risk and intervene to reduce risk. This study clearly showed the value of segmenting players, by type of game (ticket only vs. active game), and by player groups to focus responsible gambling supports on the games and players where these are needed most.</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>GPEB is updating the Responsible Gambling Standards and Advertising and Marketing Standards, which set requirements for the regulated gambling industry to support the protection of gamblers’ health. Updates will include an expectation for BCLC to use player data to identify and intervene in instances of high-risk play on PlayNow.com.</p> <hr/> <p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>BCLC is committed to continuous improvement in identifying those players most at risk and intervening to reduce risk.</p> <p>BCLC is exploring and assessing how to leverage player data to support player health, including through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced predictive modeling and customized messaging to select players.</li> <li>• Identification of play behaviours associated with risk and problem-gambling levels.</li> <li>• New programming to actively identify high-risk online gambling behaviours for the purpose of proactively interacting and intervening with players that are actively experiencing harms.</li> </ul>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Marketing and promotion of responsible gambling supports and treatment programs should shift to online and mobile formats, given that those who gamble online, and those who fit the higher-risk Active Player group in particular, show higher risk than other gamblers.</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>The RPGP is working through a rebranding and marketing project, focussed on reducing stigmas associated with gambling problems. This project creates new ways of promoting and marketing services to high risk demographics, including online gamblers. GPEB is planning the development of an annual public awareness campaign outlining the myths, risks and facts of gambling and the supports available for those in need.</p> <p>GPEB has also shifted its programming to further support gamblers across a variety of platforms. With its support line partner, BC 211, GPEB is integrating new text and online chat functions to support these high-risk groups. The marketing and promotion of these supports is conducted by GPEB's support line provider.</p> <p>Additionally, counselling, outreach, and prevention support are all offered virtually and can be accessed through a streamlined online request form on the new BC RPGP website. The new website has also incorporated direct online access to GPEB's contracted workforce for online players that wish to seek out support regionally.</p> <hr/> <p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>In 2020, BCLC enhanced its GameSense Advisor (GSA) program to offer player support services through telephone and live chat accessible through PlayNow.com, BCLC.com and GameSense.com.</p> <p>GSAs maintain professional training in mental health, cultural sensitivity and appropriate response to provide customers with support and assistance to access community and gambling help resources. To support the initiative, BCLC launched marketing campaigns outlining GSA availability throughout the summer and fall of 2020. Marketing campaign plans for 2021 continue to emphasize the benefits of accessing GSAs.</p> <p>In December 2020, BCLC launched its first PlayNow.com Voluntary Self-Exclusion awareness campaign to remind players that self-exclusion from PlayNow.com is available. As part of the campaign, a targeted email was sent to all active online casino, Keno, and sports players.</p> <p>In addition to targeted GameSense marketing campaigns emphasizing supports and resources available through PlayNow.com, the website offers a variety of messages and links to the GameSense program to encourage informed gambling decisions.</p> <p>Lastly, BCLC is committed to the continued promotion of Gambling Support BC services.</p>
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5.	<p>The visibility, accessibility and promotion of responsible gambling (RG) tools on the PlayNow site should be heightened, including push communications with reminders, links and instructions for relevant tools, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-assessment tool that would produce immediate results and be paired with customized recommendations to use tools and strategies to reduce risk,</li> <li>• Short tutorials on how games work to increase general awareness,</li> <li>• Dashboards to increase and maintain self-awareness of their play,</li> <li>• Limit-setting tools to support them in self-managing their play,</li> </ul> <p>Tools to manage their play for them, such as short-term breaks, self-exclusion, and blocking software (via free download).</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>GPEB is updating the Responsible Gambling Standards and Advertising and Marketing Standards, which set requirements for the regulated gambling industry to support the protection of gamblers' health. Updates will include an expectation for how RG tools are presented and incentivised on PlayNow.com.</p> <hr/> <p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>BCLC has developed dashboards for PlayNow.com players to have visibility into their withdrawals, activity (time online), number of deposits and deposit amounts. A fifth dashboard is currently in development to provide visibility into wagers and is expected to launch in FY21/22. Each dashboard has a budget tip directing the player to responsible gambling tools and information.</p> <p>BCLC is exploring a self- assessment tool for players and reviewing learnings from the 2019 PlayNow.com responsible-gambling-tools awareness campaign to determine future campaigns.</p> <p>BCLC is developing an active Voluntary Self-Exclusion reinstatement program, expected to launch in FY22/23, to help ensure players have the knowledge and support they need to safely return to gambling.</p> <p>Also under development is a targeted login notification tool for PlayNow.com to display information to players at the time that they login to the site. This is expected to launch in FY21/22.</p> <p>BCLC will also re-design the Budget pages of PlayNow.com to make the tools easier to understand. Part of the redesign will include the addition of trend data at relevant pages of the site (i.e. displaying the deposit trends dashboard on the deposit page). This is expected to launch in FY21/22.</p>
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6.	<p>Engagement with RG tools should be encouraged and “incentivized”. The recommendation is to provide players with rewards for each level of engagement, from completing tutorials to completing self-exclusion without breach. There is mounting evidence that providing rewards, even monetary rewards, for healthier behaviours can be part of a successful strategy to help people help themselves.</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>GPEB is updating the Responsible Gambling and Advertising and Marketing Standards, which set requirements for the gambling industry to support the protection of gamblers’ health. Updates will include expectations for how BCLC will incentivise the use of RG tools pending a fulsome review of the cited evidence.</p> <p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>BCLC will conduct a jurisdictional review of the incentivization of healthy play that includes the use of tools to manage time and money. The final report is due June 2021. Depending on the findings, BCLC will conduct a technology and operational review to assess feasibility. If technically feasible, a trial program will measure uptake and impact on player usage of the tools.</p> <p>Promotional education activities at land-based casino locations have been successful in expanding awareness and encouraging customer interaction with GSAs. With learnings from offering GameSense educational activities and incentives at venues, BCLC will explore new opportunities through PlayNow.com that showcase GameSense resources, educational tools and safer play messages, while also aiming to increase meaningful customer interactions with GSAs through the phone and Live Chat.</p>
7.	<p>Blocking software could be offered as a free download to anyone in the province. Those most at-risk in this survey, the Active Player group, reported greater willingness to use responsible gambling supports, including software to block access to all gambling sites in order to stop gambling. These products have advanced considerably in recent years and may offer flexibility to players such as blocking for certain time periods to provide a break, or blocking only certain (e.g., non-regulated) sites.</p>	<p><b>GPEB</b></p> <p>Upon special request and with treatment rationale, the RPGP subsidizes access to blocking software through its clinical and outreach services. This software provides clients with the ability to block both unregulated gambling sites as well as PlayNow.com.</p> <p><b>BCLC</b></p> <p>PlayNow.com has a Short-Term Account Lockout tool that allows players to temporarily restrict access to their account from 24 hours to 14 days. This is currently available and does not require the player to download additional software.</p> <p>The GameSense section of PlayNow.com features a section for “Managing Online Content” that has information on content-filtering software.</p> <p>BCLC will explore the effectiveness of current blocking software to identify reliable and validated products to include in our support options.</p>