

Treatment and Other Interventions for Disordered Gamblers in the Czech Republic



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BACKGROUND: Gambling can lead to a gambling disorder which requires specific treatment interventions. Help to problem and pathological gamblers is mostly provided through a network of addiction treatment services, i.e. services for people addicted to drugs. **AIMS:** This paper aims at mapping the forms and accessibility of specialised counselling and treatment services targeted at problem gamblers in the Czech Republic. **METHODS:** Facility surveys among addiction treatment programmes conducted in 2012 and 2014 which have the character of a census and data from the final reports of the governmental subsidy proceedings in 2013 and 2014. **SAMPLE:** There were 254 programmes participating in the facility survey in 2012 and 271 in 2014. The sample based on the governmental subsidy proceedings consisted of 144 programmes both in 2013 and 2014. **RESULTS:** There are currently 250-300 specialised addiction treatment programmes in the Czech Republic. Of the 254 facilities that participated in the survey in 2012, 133 declared that pathologi-

cal gamblers were one of the target groups of the service, and 18 programmes offered specialised help. In 2014, there were 138 programmes that considered pathological gamblers as one of their target groups, of which 10-20 programmes were specialised. Substance use counselling services, psychiatric outpatient counselling or treatment programmes, and psychiatric hospitals account for the majority of these specialised programmes. Apart from specialised services, self-help programmes have appeared recently, and pathological gamblers are clients of other treatment and counselling services, including social and legal assistance. Debt counselling is an indispensable intervention in its own right. **CONCLUSION:** The accessibility of specialised services for problem gamblers in the Czech Republic is low; there are about 10–20 programmes. There is no dense network of counselling and treatment services focusing on pathological gambling, and self-help programmes are yet to be developed. In addition, telephone-based and online counselling options are limited.

KEY WORDS: GAMBLING – GAMBLING DISORDER – PATHOLOGICAL GAMBLING – TREATMENT – ADDICTION – TREATMENT ACCESS

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