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Cognitive-Behavior Therapy for problem gamblers: Do we need a unified model?

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Abstract

Cognitive-Behavior Therapy (CBT) is increasingly being considered the psychological treatment of choice for problem gamblers. A number of reviews have reported overall positive outcomes in both randomized controlled and naturalistic trials. However, there is also dissenting evidence that CBT may, in fact, be no better than other talking therapies or indeed no treatment. Such evidence is driven by research using limited methodologies. However, such criticism cannot be ignored. This paper will present an overview of the multitude of CBT approaches for gamblers being offered around the world. Common elements of all approaches will be examined and the possibility of a unified model suggested. This standardization of CBT for problem gambling may provide a more consistent approach internationally and thus give greater weight to the overall efficacy of CBT.

Biography

Dr. Tolchard has practiced and taught Cognitive behavior Therapy in Australia and the United Kingdom over the past 20 years. Dr. Tolchard has worked in the field of problem gambling for 17 years as a researcher and clinician and has conducted research including suicide, mental health, treatment outcomes, general practitioners and psychosocial aspects of gambling. Barry is Deputy Head of School (Health): research at the University of New England, Australia.