

Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation (VRGF) recommendations response table to Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) report, *Reducing the harm caused by gambling*

VAGO recommendation	VRGF action	Completion date
<p>1. VRGF ensure that evidence from its research informs the design and improvement of prevention programs and treatment services (see Section 2.2), through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> requiring funded research to identify recommended actions for the Foundation to improve program and service practice, where appropriate tracking progress in implementing the recommendations reporting the progress to the Foundation's board and in its annual report. 	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>Acknowledging the Foundation's national and international reputation as a funder of high-quality research into the gambling environment and harm prevention interventions, the Foundation will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensure that funded research is required to identify recommended actions to improve program and service practice, where appropriate continue to improve processes to record and track progress when implementing recommendations from evaluation and research evidence report progress to the Board and in the Foundation's annual report. 	December 2021
<p>2. VRGF apply available research and evaluation and where appropriate, fund research and evaluation to improve the efficacy of treatment and support services, in areas identified through its service performance review, including (Sections 2.1, 3.3, 4.2, and 4.6):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrating peer support as part of the Foundation's treatment and support services (Section 4.2) investigating the causes of client disengagement with Gambler's Help services and use the findings to improve client engagement and retention in counselling (Section 4.6) evaluating the Foundation's various treatment approaches for gambling harm to assess their effectiveness (see Sections 2.1 and 4.6). 	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>Subsequent to the development of an outcomes framework for the Foundation, the Foundation will assess client needs and review areas identified through the previous service review. Work to improve the efficacy of treatment and support services will be actioned in line with the Foundation's strategic plan 2021-22 to 2023-24.</p>	July 2023
<p>3. VRGF develops an evaluation and outcomes framework to guide prevention and treatment programs, supported by: (Section 3.3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a prevention program design that clearly seeks to impact the identified risk factors/protective factors contributing to gambling harm (see Section 3.1) a common set of outcome or proxy outcome measures that can enable the tracking of performance of both individual programs and the collective performance of programs (see Sections 3.3 and 3.4). 	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>As acknowledged in the VAGO report, an outcomes framework to assess the Foundation's impact on gambling harm prevention and reduction, including consideration of the risk and protective factors that contribute to gambling harm, is presently under development. A common set of outcome or proxy outcome measures will be considered in this process.</p>	July 2021
<p>4. VRGF include assessment of the cost-effectiveness of prevention approaches in future evaluations and for the media campaigns aimed at reducing the risk from sports betting among young people (see Section 3.2).</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The Foundation's prevention programs are unique globally. Measuring cost effectiveness in preventing/reducing gambling harm is challenging and to the Foundation's knowledge has not been measured in other jurisdictions. The Foundation is currently measuring impact and effectiveness across the prevention program. Future evaluations will include a requirement to assess cost-effectiveness of prevention approaches, where appropriate.</p> <p>Subsequent to the development of an outcomes framework for the Foundation, campaign effectiveness measures will be reviewed and revised where necessary to better demonstrate the impact of our multifaceted strategy to reduce the risk from sports betting among young people.</p>	December 2021
<p>5. VRGF identify, share and promote better practices within the funded organisations, with particular focus on building community capacity for preventing gambling harm by providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> tailored guidance and resources to support program design and delivery (see Section 3.4) opportunities for sharing learnings with and between funded organisations (see Section 3.4). 	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The Foundation has mature and strong partnerships with community-based organisations delivering prevention programs within communities. The Foundation identifies, shares and promotes practice improvements with its funded partners, and will continue to develop its processes to build community capacity for preventing gambling harm.</p>	July 2022
<p>6. VRGF establish client information sharing and referral protocols between different treatment service options, including between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gambling Help Online and all other Gambler's Help services (see Section 4.2) the local Gambler's Help services and peer support options (see Section 4.2) the Gambler's Helpline and Gambling Help Online services and programs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culturally and linguistically diverse communities, where appropriate (see Section 4.3). 	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The Foundation has commenced discussions and planning to enable client information sharing and referral protocols to be established between different treatment service options, including working with other jurisdictions to further integrate the online and Victorian systems. The initial priority in 2021-22 is the development of referral protocols between Gambler's Help services and peer support options.</p>	July 2023
<p>7. VRGF as part of the evaluation and outcomes framework outlined in recommendation 3:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> complete a strategic review of its core service datasets to identify deficiencies or quality issues that limit the usefulness of this data (see Sections 4.2, 4.3 and 4.6) further develop client-level outcome measures with the Gambler's Help service sector so that they measure efficacy and are fit for purpose (see Section 4.6). 	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>Subsequent to development of the outcomes framework, the Foundation will review core service datasets and work with the Gambler's Help service sector to further develop client level outcomes measures to ensure service efficacy</p>	July 2022
<p>8. Victorian Responsible Gambling Foundation, the Department of Justice and Community Safety the Department of Health and the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing establish systems and protocols for gamblers with co-occurring conditions that enable the Foundation and its funded entities to undertake holistic screening assessments and refer cases to appropriate services across mental health, alcohol and other drugs, homelessness and family violence services (see Sections 4.4 and 4.5).</p>	<p>Accepted.</p> <p>The Foundation will continue to explore opportunities to work with the Departments of Justice and Community Safety, Health, and Families, Fairness and Housing to establish practical and program-based systems and protocols to support identification, treatment and cross-agency referral of gamblers with co-occurring conditions.</p>	December 2021