

STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING PROBLEM GAMBLERS AND FAMILY IN GROUP TREATMENT

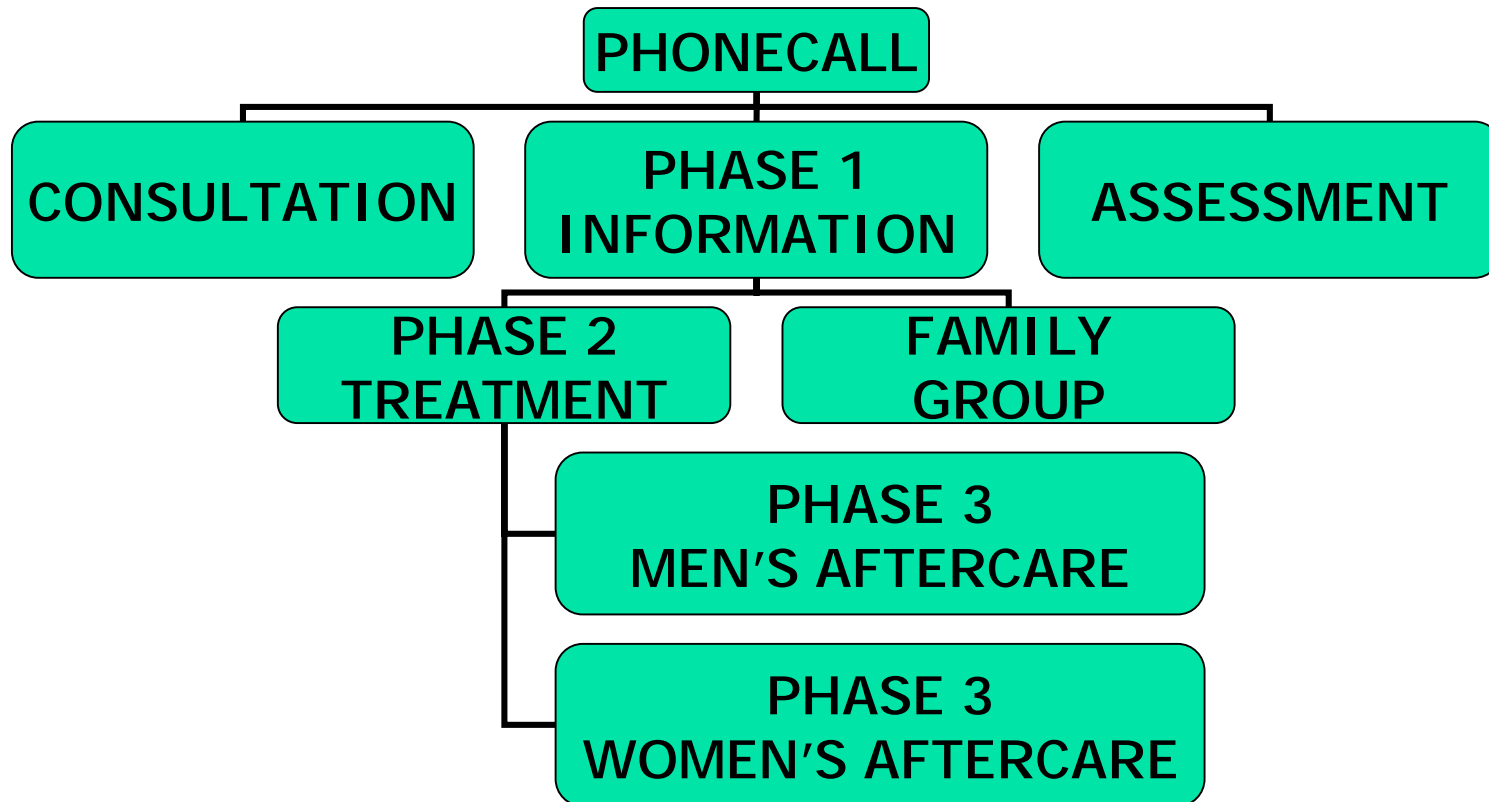




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PROGRAM STRUCTURE





ANNUAL CONTACTS

	Phone Inquiries	Assessments	Information Sessions
Gamblers	100	85	75
Family members	70	30	55
General information, Professionals or Referrals onward	35		5
Totals	205	115	135



THE PROBLEM

- Many clients
- Few staff
- Client resistance to entering groups
- High dropout rate



MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR THE GAMBLER

- Low intrinsic motivation for change (self)
- High extrinsic motivation for change (family)
- Ambivalence shifts in relation to crisis
- Looking for a quick fix



MOTIVATIONAL FACTORS FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

- They are usually in crisis
- Want help for the gambler
- Often do not see themselves in need of treatment
- Want a quick fix



THE PLAN

- Give clients what they want.
- Give it to them NOW!



OBJECTIVES

- Remove obstacles to entering group.
- Empower client choices.
- Foster re-engagement.
- Enhance motivation for change.
- Build accountability, consistency.



STRATEGIES

- Keep intake calls short.
- Keep assessments short.
- Offer immediate service.
- Tolerate anonymity initially.
- Allow client to choose level of service.



STRATEGIES

- Respect client selected goals.
- Recommend realistic goals.
- Give permission to drop out and re-engage at any time.
- Build accountability via family involvement.

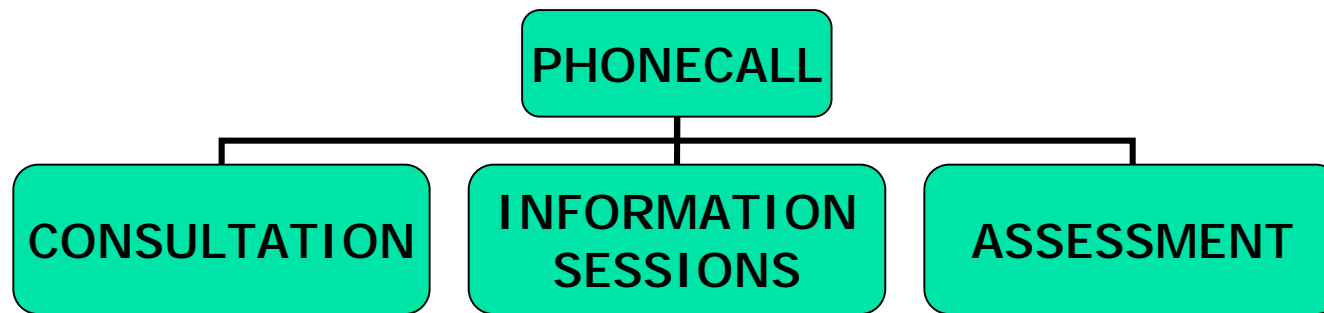


OBSTACLES TO GROUP TREATMENT FOR THE GAMBLER

Fear of:

- Anxiety and panic attacks in group
- Being forced to stop gambling
- Losing access to money
- Personal and professional exposure

ENGAGEMENT: THE PHONECALL



- Call goes directly to a gambling counsellor.
- Is brief: find out what they want and offer a selection of options.



THE PHONECALL

- Caller may book to be seen within 48 hours.
- Caller is *invited* to an info session.
- Caller is encouraged to bring along anyone who is concerned.



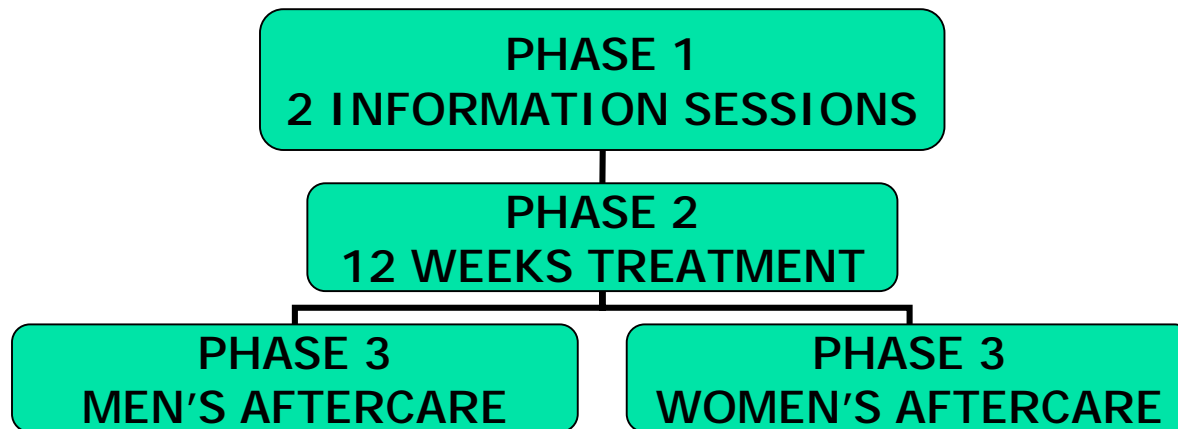
THE PHONE CALL

Assurance that:

- They don't have to want to stop gambling to come here.
- The info sessions are separate from treatment.
- The info sessions require no participation.
- No commitment to assessment or treatment is required to attend the info sessions.



TREATMENT FOR GAMBLERS



- All groups are weekly.
- All groups are continuous intake.
- Client may stay in any phase as long as they need to.
- Client must attain abstinence to attend Phase 3.

TREATMENT FOR FAMILIES



**PHASE 1
(Info Sessions)**

FAMILY GROUP

- Family may attend either group with or without an assessment.
- Length of stay is determined by the client.

PHASE 1

Information Sessions

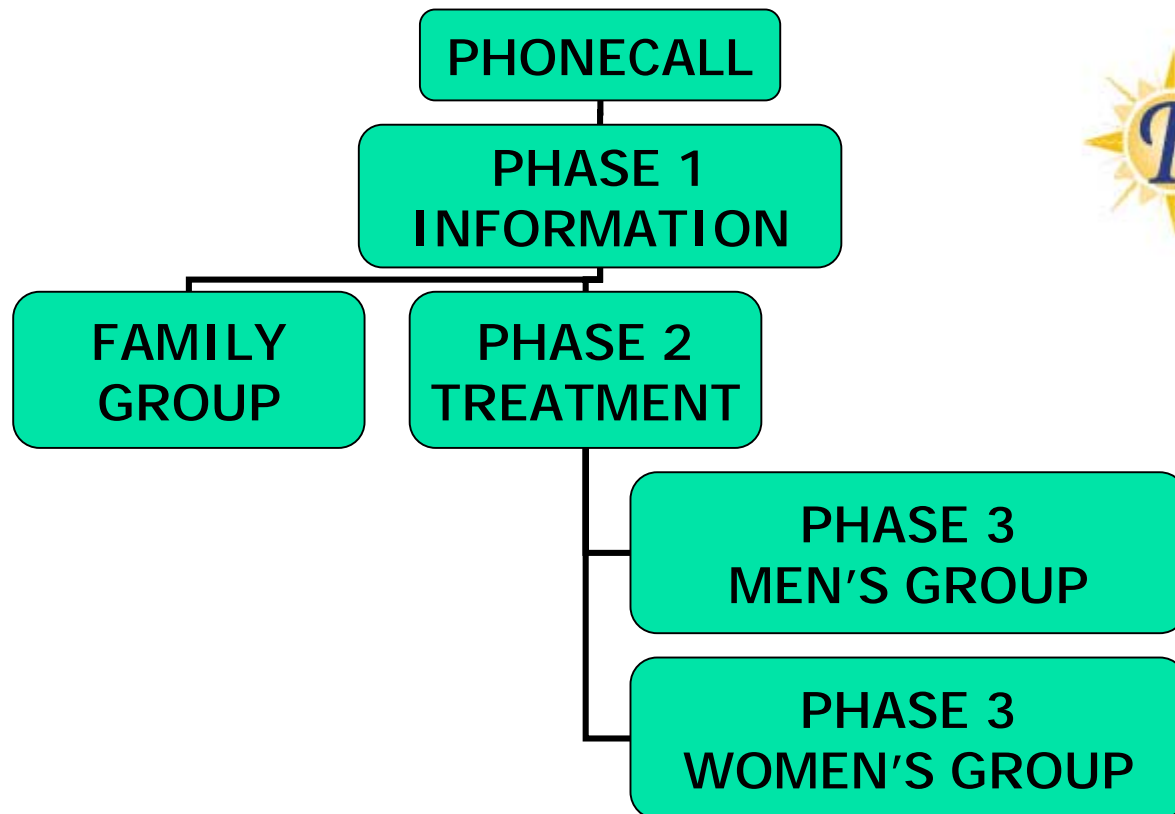
- Informal lecture format.
- Noninvasive, neutral, motivational.
- Overview of problem gambling is given.
- Continuum of gambling behaviour is presented with recommended goals.
- Suggestions for change are offered.

PHASE 1

Information Sessions

- Vulnerabilities to problem gambling are identified.
- Description of recovery tasks is given.
- Outline of treatment program is given.
- Question is asked: What's next?
- *Invitation* is offered to the next phase.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE



FOLLOW-THROUGH (GAMBLERS)



	1998/99	2000/02
Phone Inquiries	67 = 100%	140 = 100%
Attend Assessment	85%	86%
Start Info Sessions	58%	74%
Complete Info Sessions	36%	47%
Enter Treatment Group	27%	60%
Complete Treatment Group	13%	25%
Enter Aftercare	13%	10%