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**International Advisory Panel's Recommendations on
Problem Gambling and Other Addictions**

1. Singapore's proactive and coordinated approach in dealing with problem gambling and other addictions was commended by the International Advisory Panel (IAP). Amongst its recommendations, the IAP highlighted that this approach should continue to be the key focus of our national strategy to tackle problem gambling and other harmful addictions.
2. The IAP was set up jointly by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) to advise the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) and the National Addictions Management Centre (NAMC) on issues related to problem gambling and other addictions. The IAP convened its inaugural meeting in Singapore on 5 -7 December 2007.
3. In its report submitted to the MOH and NCPG, the IAP recommended the following focus areas:
 - a. Emphasis on public education and preventive efforts in addressing problem gambling;
 - b. Joint capability building and sharing of resources in counselling and treatment;
 - c. Coordination and collaboration among various agencies in data collection and evaluation; and
 - d. Focus on research in problem gambling and other addictions
4. MOH and NCPG have accepted these recommendations and will work together with the relevant agencies on the implementation details. It will be an integrated approach aimed at strengthening existing addictions management programmes and building greater capabilities in preventive education, manpower and physical infrastructure.

Follow Up Actions

Building Capability for Problem Gambling

5. In the coming months, the NCPG will partner MCYS and MOH, particularly CAMP, in building capability for problem gambling services and research. NCPG's priority would be on training for professionals and frontline staff in the community and social service agencies; as well as specialised training and attachment with overseas problem gambling service providers for designated agencies. It will also focus its research agenda on problem gambling among the youth and elderly.

Development of Medical Services and Capabilities for Addiction Management

6. The immediate focus will be to extend and strengthen existing addictions management services under the Community Addictions Management Programme (CAMP).

In this initial phase, the focus will be on the following:

- a. Build-up of the necessary expertise in addictions management
- b. Evaluate and fine-tune existing treatment programmes
- c. Put in place new management programmes, if necessary
- d. Review infrastructure needs
- e. Identify key areas for research on addictions management

7. A planning team to be led by the Institute of Mental Health will be appointed by mid-2008 to drive and monitor the development of clinical services, manpower capability and infrastructure for addictions management in Singapore.

8. The IAP will continue to play an advisory role during this phase. The panel plans to meet again in the second half of 2008.

9. More details of the IAP recommendations, Terms of Reference and list of members can be found in the attached documents.

4 April 2008

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International Advisory Panel to National Addictions Management Centre and National Council on Problem Gambling

Report of the Inaugural Meeting 5-7 December 2007, Singapore

1. The Inaugural Meeting of the International Advisory Panel (IAP) for the National Addictions Management Centre (NAMC) and the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) was held on 5-7 December 2007 in Singapore. The IAP was set up jointly by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) to advise MOH and NCPG on prevention and control strategies required to address problem gambling and other addictions including drug, alcohol and behavioral addiction.
2. The IAP's Terms of Reference include:
 - i. share insights on global trends and highlight critical issues in measures to address problem gambling and harmful addictions;
 - ii. advise on how problem gambling and addictions prevention, management and treatment measures could be developed and improved in Singapore;
 - iii. advise on research areas on problem gambling and addictions; and
 - iv. advise on the infrastructural, manpower and clinical development of the proposed NAMC.

I. Global Trends and Measures to address Problem Gambling and Harmful Addictions

3. Key global trends observed by the IAP members include:
 - a. increase in number of gaming venues and opportunities (e.g., Internet, mobile phones);
 - b. increase in normalisation and glamourisation of gambling;
 - c. research on and evaluation of treatment outcomes is increasingly focusing on the efficacy and extent of harm reduction and how individuals with problem gambling and their families are helped¹;
 - d. helplines are evolving in the problem gambling field to be much more than the first point of contact, and would therefore need to be considered as one element in a full spectrum of services;
 - e. focus on the importance of different factors at different stages of the treatment of addiction;
 - f. focus on the effectiveness and impact of training professionals who treat addiction problems.

¹ Rationale is to separate the person from the problems and reduce stigma

4. The IAP members commended Singapore's proactive approach towards problem gambling. The IAP members advised the adoption or continuation of the following measures to address problem gambling and harmful addiction:

- a. Adopt an integrated approach in addressing problem gambling. The IAP members commended Singapore's inter-ministry approach to address problem gambling and recommended that this approach continue.
- b. Effectiveness measures to address problem gambling could focus more on objective indicators of harm such as incidence of family violence, crime, bankruptcy, etc. related to problem gambling.
- c. Awareness and prevention services can be targeted to the general population.
- d. Build up treatment and intervention services gradually. Integrated evidence informed treatment approaches that bring together clinicians, consumers and researchers.

II. Addressing Problem Gambling Prevention and Addictions Management and Treatment

5. The IAP emphasised the importance of preventive measures and treatment in addressing problem gambling and suggested the following:

Public Education and Prevention Strategies:

- a. Widespread dissemination of various information resources is necessary in public education on all forms of addictions.
- b. A multi-faceted and segmented approach for public education on problem gambling.
- c. Specific and targeted messages for harder-to-reach groups of the population.
- d. Involve parents, peers and role models in public education efforts for children and youth.

Helpline services and community and social service agencies

- e. Structure helplines to meet the varied needs of callers, and relate to research and evaluation to provide seamless and immediate connection to service providers.
- f. Train and help counsellors to appreciate that building rapport and engaging clients are critical in their work and to serve as an avenue for callers to access information or help services.
- g. Use multiple channels for outreach to problem gamblers and their families seeking information.
- h. Train professionals in the community on problem gambling.
- i. Educate frontline persons in the community to familiarise them with problem gambling issues and train them to identify individuals affected by problem gambling.

Problem Gambling Pilot Centres and Capability Building Framework

- j. Build capabilities in a two-pronged approach, i.e. offering learning opportunities for counsellors from the pilot centres through overseas attachments, and inviting overseas expertise to provide on-site supervision in Singapore.
- k. Collaboration between pilot centres and addiction management programmes to facilitate resource sharing, mutual capability building and skills transfer.
- l. Train senior staff in community and social service agencies to supervise staff to better identify problem gambling issues and facilitate better referrals.

Social Safeguards for Problem Gambling (For Casinos and Other Operators)

- m. Ensure a more integrated response to exclusion requests.
- n. Casinos should play an active and significant role in the practice of responsible gambling and be clear about their obligations.

III. Advice on Research on Problem Gambling and Addictions

6. The Meeting recommended the following in building up local research expertise:

- a. Identify Singapore's research competitive advantage.
- b. Establish centres of excellence for problem gambling and addiction.
- c. Encourage programmatic approach to research at both the strategic organisational level and individual researcher level. Some of the suggested initiatives include i) undergraduate/postgraduate scholarships; ii) competitive research grants; iii) multidisciplinary collaboration; iv) visiting professorships at local universities; and v) interdisciplinary teams engaging in top-tier journal/book publications.
- d. Prioritise the areas of research. Some of the suggested priority topics of research include studies on youth and other more vulnerable groups and tracking of changes in gambling-related attitudes and behaviours.

IV. Advice on a National Addictions Management Programme

7. The IAP reviewed the current addictions management programmes and suggested that issues related to process and service delivery should be reviewed. They emphasised that it is important to establish ways of developing a good match between programmes and patients.

8. In general, IAP was of the view that such national programmes has the potential to become a centre of medical excellence in treatment, training and research in gambling addiction. The IAP also made the following recommendations:

Clinical Programme

- a. The clinical programme should be based on the need for services that will evolve over time and should be evidenced-based.
- b Facilities for adolescents and adults should be kept separate. Patients with different types of addictions should also be segregated.
- c. The feasibility of providing treatment services for pathological gambling in a community setting should also be studied.

Infrastructure & Manpower

- d. The size of the programme should be appropriate to the projected clinical load. Building manpower capabilities should start early to train adequate addiction psychiatrists, psychologists and counsellors.
- e. To operationalise the programme, it is important to actively engage the clinical team and related resources to develop strategies to enhance the current programmes and to plan for new ones, such as those for gambling and for youths.

Joint Follow-up

9. The IAP recommended that NCPG, MCYS and MOH coordinate joint follow-up actions in relevant areas including the following:

Public education and responsible gambling

- Widespread dissemination of information resources to the public.
- Casinos to play an active role in implementing and promoting responsible gambling initiatives.

3-Tier Service Framework and Capability building

- Joint training and sharing of resources to build up expertise in clinical and treatment research.
- Establish mid- to long-term plans for professional training and career management to produce a critical mass of experts for addressing problem gambling and other addictions in Singapore.

Data Collection and Research

- Increase coordination and collaboration among the various agencies involved in addictions management on data collection and evaluation.
- Enhance research capability and develop research culture on problem gambling and other addictions.

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ANNEX

INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL FOR THE NAMC & NCPG

| CO-CHAIRMEN | DESIGNATION |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <i>Professor David Chan</i> | Interim Dean, School of Social Sciences Professor of Psychology Singapore Management University |
| <i>Professor Goh Chee Leok</i> | Senior Consultant Office of the Director of Medical Services Ministry of Health Senior Consultant National Skin Centre |
| MEMBERS | |
| <i>Dr Alex Blaszczynski</i> | Chair in Psychology School of Psychology University of Sydney Australia |
| <i>Dr Jeffery Derevensky</i> | Professor and Director of Training in School / Applied Child Psychology and Co-Director International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours McGill University Canada |
| <i>Dr Gracemary Leung</i> | Director Psychological Services Unit University of Hong Kong Hong Kong |
| <i>Dr Loreen Rugle</i> | Director Gambling Treatment Programme Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centre USA |
| <i>Professor Dwayne Simpson</i> | Director Institute of Behavioural Research Texas Christian University USA |
| <i>Professor John Strang</i> | Director National Addictions Centre Institute of Psychiatry (King's College, London) UK |
| <i>Dr Samson Tse</i> | Acting Director, Centre for Gambling Studies and Associate Professor, Mental Health |

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| | Development Programme University of Auckland New Zealand |
| <i>Dr Rachel Volberg</i> | President Gemini Research Ltd. USA |

Professor David Chan

Professor David Chan is the Chairman of NCPG's Research Sub-committee. He is currently Professor of Psychology and Interim Dean at the Singapore Management University's School of Social Sciences. Prof Chan is also Consultant to the Prime Minister's Office, the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports, the Singapore Police Force, the Singapore Prison Service; as well as a Member of the National Youth Council's Advisory Panel on Youth Research and a Member on a panel that advises the Government on inter-agency issues in social science research in Singapore. Prof Chan is elected Representative-at-Large executive committee member of the Research Methods Division of the Academy of Management, Editor or editorial board member of seven international journals and a recipient of numerous prestigious international scholarly awards. Together with Nobel Laureate in Economics Professor Daniel Kahneman and Professor Ed Diener, he serves on an international committee representing several professional associations that is formed to propose measures of national well-being for the United Nations. Prof Chan's biographical profile is featured in the First Edition (2007) of Marquis Who's Who in Asia and the 25th Anniversary Edition (2008) of Marquis Who's Who in the World.

Professor Goh Chee Leok

Professor Goh came to the National Skin Centre in 1988 and was its Medical Director for 14 years, between January 1990 and March 2004. He has been a part-time clinical teacher since 1981 and was appointed an Associate Clinical Professor in 1992 at the Faculty of Medicine, National University of Singapore. Since January 2001, he has been Clinical Professor at the University. He was the Interim CEO of the National Kidney Foundation between July 2005-April 2006. He was also recently appointed Senior Consultant to the Office of the Director of Medical Services in the Ministry of Health. Professor Goh was awarded the Public Administration Medal (Gold) in 2004 and the Public Service Medal in 2006. Professor Goh was Past President of the Society of Laser Medicine and Surgery of Singapore and also past president of the Environmental and Occupational Dermatology Society of Singapore. He has published more than 240 scientific papers in peer-reviewed journals and is a chapter contributor to numerous dermatology reference books and editor of several reference dermatology books including a recent atlas Asian Skin – A Reference Colour Atlas of Dermatology, published by McGraw Hill.

Dr Alex Blaszczynski

An internationally renowned and sought after researcher and clinician in, gambling and problem gambling, Dr. Blaszczynski developed the pathways model of

pathological gambling, which is often used and well-received in many areas. He was conferred the 2004 NCRG Senior Investigator Award by the National Centre for Responsible Gaming (United States). Dr. Blaszczynski holds positions as Chair in Psychology, School of Psychology, The University of Sydney; Head of Department of Medical Psychology, Westmead Hospital; and Conjoint Professor, University of New South Wales, School of Psychiatry. In the course of his distinguished career, Dr. Blaszczynski has published more than 100 articles, papers and studies and also has founded several organisations, including the Australian National Council for Problem Gambling. His work has proved invaluable to furthering the understanding and treatment of pathological gambling and other compulsive behaviors.

Dr Jeffrey Derevensky

Dr Jeffrey L. Derevensky is Professor and Director of Training in School/Applied Child Psychology and Professor, Department of Psychiatry at McGill University. A child psychologist and highly regarded expert on youth gambling, he is the Co-Director of the McGill University Youth Gambling Research and Treatment Clinic and the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours. Dr Derevensky is also clinical consultant to numerous hospitals, school boards, government agencies and corporations. He has published widely in the field of youth gambling and is on the editorial board of several journals. Dr Derevensky and his team have helped governments across the globe establish research priorities and have been instrumental in the development of responsible practices, treatment centres, prevention programmes and social policies.

Dr Gracemary Leung

Dr Gracemary K H Leung is currently Director of Psychological Services Unit, Department of Psychology, as well as Honorary Assistant Professor in the faculty of Social Sciences of Hong Kong University. She is an Honorary Fellow for the Hong Kong University's Jockey Club Research Centre for Prevention of Suicide. She is also Honorary Consultant to the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals Even centre (TWGH), specializing in the treatment of compulsive gamblers. Dr. Leung has over 30 years of experience in psychological research, and research in gambling-related issues, as well as in counselling problem gamblers. She has authored a book on Gambling – Causes, Consequences and Treatment (賭博 – 前因 . 後果 . 處理), which reviews the relevant research concerning this field as well as her own research on the assessment/treatment of compulsive gamblers. Dr. Leung is a Chartered Clinical Psychologist, a registered psychologist in Hong Kong and an Associate Fellow in both the British Psychologist Society and the Hong Kong Psychological Society.

Dr. Loreen Rugle

Loreen Rugle, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist who has focused on treatment and research of pathological gambling since 1984. Currently, Dr. Rugle is Director of the Gambling Treatment Program at the Louis Stokes Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Brecksville Division in Cleveland, Ohio. She is also clinical and research director for Trimeridian, Inc., a company dedicated to the treatment and research of problem and pathological gambling. She has participated in

research on neuroimaging, pharmacotherapy and genetic studies of pathological gamblers. Dr Rugle has also been in a member of the Institute of Problem Gambling as a trainer, and has won numerous awards in gambling addictions research and treatment.

Professor D. Dwayne Simpson

Professor Dwayne Simpson is Director of the Institute of Behavioral Research (IBR) and the S.B. Sells Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Addiction Research at Texas Christian University. His research on drug addiction and treatment effectiveness (reported in over 300 publications, 12 books and special issues) includes several large-scale and longitudinal national evaluations. Over the past 15 years, he has focused on assessments of client functioning and service delivery process, and how these factors influence treatment engagement and retention rates, stages of recovery, and long-term outcomes. This work includes development of cognitive and behavioral interventions shown to enhance client services and improvements in program management. His interests have expanded to the study of organizational behavior and its role in transferring evidence-based innovations into practice in community-based treatment agencies as well as criminal justice settings. Professor Simpson is an advisor to national and international research centers and government organizations that address drug abuse treatment and related policy issues, a Fellow in both the American Psychological Association and American Psychological Society, and a member of the editorial boards for several journals.

Professor John Strang

Professor John Strang is Director of the National Addiction Centre in the United Kingdom (UK). One of the leading experts in addiction, Professor Strang influences policy at national and international levels as an advisor to the UK government. He is also Clinical Director of Drug & Alcohol Services, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. Prof Strang has published over 200 articles in scientific journals, and edited four books on addiction. In his capacity as Consultant Advisor, he chaired the working group that prepared the “Orange Book” Guidelines published in 1999 by the Department of Health. His main interests are health service research, epidemiology, public policy, and opiate treatment.

Dr Samson Tse

Dr Samson Tse is Acting Director at the Centre for Gambling Studies and Associate Professor for the Mental Health Development Programme at the University of Auckland. He is also Director of the Centre for Asian Health Research and Evaluation, at the University of Auckland where he is also Associate Professor in Mental Health Development and a senior lecturer on the topic. A native of Hong Kong, Dr Tse’s interest in Asian social and health issues grew in 2002 when he moved to Auckland with his family. Dr Tse has been invited to join a number of government advisory committees in New Zealand on issues such as problem gambling and mental health workforce competence. Dr Tse has led three major gambling studies in New Zealand, including the psychosocial determinants of problem gambling, venue-based host responsibility and the effectiveness of intervention. Dr Tse’s key focus areas are in mental health, Asian health and

problem gambling, in particular services, accessibility issues and culturally appropriate interventions.

Dr Rachel Volberg

An internationally renowned problem gambling expert, Dr Rachel Volberg has a Ph.D in Sociology from the University of California, San Francisco. She has studied the prevalence of problem and pathological gambling, including its causes and social impacts. She has also authored or co-authored 37 research reports on the prevalence of problem and pathological gambling in several states and provinces in the United States, and in foreign countries. Dr. Volberg served as President of the US NCPG from 2003 to 2006, after serving for ten years on the NCPG Board of Directors and for three years on the NCPG Executive Committee. She is currently Ex-officio member of the Committee. She is also President of Gemini Research, which she established in 1992, the only company that specialises in the study of gambling and problem gambling in the general population.

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ANNEX

IAP Terms of Reference

6. The IAP was set up jointly by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) in 2007 to advise MOH and the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) on prevention and control strategies required to address problem gambling and other addictions including drug, alcohol and behavioral addiction.

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