

Friday, 30 November 2012

Innovative multicultural gambling initiative wins national award

Successfully tackling the difficult topic of problem gambling in NSW's non-English speaking communities has led to a National Multicultural Marketing award for the NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service and The Responsible Gambling Fund.

The NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service (MHCS), a state wide service funded by the NSW Ministry of Health and The Responsible Gambling Fund (RGF) in the NSW Department of Trade & Investment were recognised for the *What's Gambling Really Costing You?* campaign. Delivered in Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian and Vietnamese, the campaign uses DVDs and online activities to create dialogue within communities about what is often a hidden and highly-stigmatised problem.

Congratulating the winners of the Government Category of the Awards on the presentation night Wednesday 28th November, the Chair of the Community Relations Commission, Stepan Kerkyasharian said:

"This excellent and serious campaign acknowledges, up front, that there are cultural influences involved with attitudes to gambling. So, to tackle problem-gambling you need different approaches. The five different language DVDs, in Arabic, Chinese, Vietnamese Italian and Greek, were approached separately, to ensure the language and dialogue were appropriate.

"It was a full-on professional marketing campaign that consisted of research, interviews, announcements, advertisements, in-language launches, in-language resource production and distribution, state-wide media activity, editorials and community talks. They consulted counsellors, community leaders and members and most importantly actual problem gamblers," he said.

Funded by the RGF and developed by the RGF and MHCS the campaign was created in cooperation with Why Documentaries with input from the Arab Council Australia, Auburn Asian Welfare Centre, Greek Welfare Centre, Italian Association of Assistance (Co.As.It), the Vietnamese Community in Australia NSW Chapter Inc and the Multicultural Problem Gambling Service for NSW.

Peter Todaro, Director of MHCS says "We are extremely pleased to win the Government Award because we won it for such an important cause. The campaign has successfully raised awareness on the issues of gambling in NSW within the targeted communities with evidence showing that people are now taking the first step by seeking help and contacting the counselling services in their language".

The DVD's and accompanying workbook encourage problem gamblers to seek help before they lose everything they have worked hard for, their families, friends, savings and their homes. They have been used as the centrepiece of a program of community awareness events.

The DVD is made available at no cost through the in language counselling services, general practitioners (GPs), community health centres, migrant resource centres and is also available online at www.gamblinghelp.nsw.gov.au and via YouTube at www.youtube.com/gamblinghangover.

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