Background

Gambling has traditionally been the domain of men. However, in contemporary Australia and across other western countries, gambling participation has increasingly become a mainstream activity for both men and women. In fact, more women are gambling than ever before as products are diversified and enhanced to appeal to women, and gambling becomes more widely adopted as a leisure activity.

Globalisation, internet and financial technologies, as well as the expansion of gambling facilities to a wider range of settings, have all been influential in the widespread normalisation of gambling. Changes too in social attitudes have resulted in greater social acceptance of gambling, albeit alongside concern about problem gambling and its impacts. Recent research suggests that problem gambling amongst women may now be increasing in line with their increased gambling participation.

The progression to problem gambling is not well understood, but research tends to suggest the uptake of gambling and transition from non-problem to problem gambling is different for men and women.

Aims

The aims of this project are to:

1. Analyse the similarities and differences between male and female gamblers in Victoria in terms of gambling preferences, activities and styles of play; gambling motivations and attitudes; social factors; physical and mental health; family and early gambling influences; and help-seeking behaviour.

2. Analyse the similarities and differences between male and female gamblers in Victoria in terms of risk factors associated with problem and at-risk gambling and protective factors associated with non-problem gambling.

Methods

*(continued on page 2)*
This project extends analyses conducted for A Study of Gambling in Victoria (Hare, 2009) by accessing its representative dataset of N =15,000 Victorians. This enables detailed quantitative analyses of similarities and differences between men and women in terms of gambling preferences, activities and styles of play; gambling motivations and attitudes; social factors; physical and mental health; family and early gambling influences; and help-seeking behaviour.

Multivariate analysis of this dataset then develops models of risk factors associated with problem and at-risk gambling, and protective factors associated with non-problem gambling, for both men and women to identify gender differences. Using multivariate techniques overcomes deficiencies in previous analyses that have not accounted for statistical overlap amongst these factors.

Outcomes

This research informs public health and treatment measures so they can better accommodate the different gambling behaviours, risk and protective factors and help-seeking behaviours of men and of women, with consequent benefits for gamblers, their families and the Victorian community.