

Proximity likely cause of gambling problems

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New research from Swinburne University has found that living or working near gambling venues could have a direct effect on problem gambling.

The [problem gambling](#) vulnerability report, prepared for the Victorian Government by Swinburne researchers including Dr. Anna Thomas, Professor Michael Kyrios and Professor Susan Moore, found that people are more likely to gamble if [gambling](#) venues are located close to where they live, work or shop.

"Geographical accessibility could encourage impulsive gambling and make avoidance difficult for those with problems," said Moore.

"But there's more to accessibility than proximity to a venue. Some gamblers told us that gambling venues provided a welcome retreat from the stresses of daily living - a place where problems could be left outside the door.

"This aspect of accessibility was important to problem gamblers and supports research suggesting that venues can provide a physical oasis from the outside world and its problems.

"Both problem gamblers and social gamblers were attracted to venues where they could enjoy other social activities as well as gambling, and where the atmosphere was pleasant and welcoming."

According to Kyrios, accessibility had previously been measured in

limited terms such as the number of machines per capita per area - a definition which lacks an understanding of human factors.

"It is obvious that some areas have similar statistics in terms of the number of machines per capita, but there are real differences in terms of the prevalence of problem gambling versus social gambling that goes on in those areas," he said.

More information: Read the full report on the [Swinburne Research Bank](#).

Provided by Swinburne University of Technology

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