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Research Article

# Modelling vulnerability to gambling related harm: How disadvantage predicts gambling losses

Angela C. Rintoul , Charles Livingstone, Andrew P. Mellor & Damien Jolley

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## Abstract

Electronic gambling machines (EGMs) are ubiquitous in social venues such as hotels and clubs in most Australian states, and account for 55% of total gambling expenditure in Australia; they are also associated with most gambling derived harm. Because of the difficulty of assessing the prevalence of problem gambling and the incidence of gambling derived harms, gambling expenditure (i.e., the losses of those gambling) is often used in gambling research as a proxy indicator of harm. This study examines the relationship between socioeconomic disadvantage (measured by the Australian Bureau

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model, 40% of the apparent effect of disadvantage is explained by the density of EGMs.

The vulnerability surface reflects socioeconomic patterns across Melbourne. EGM vulnerability is clustered (Moran's Index 0.52; p < 0.001). High levels of EGM density in disadvantaged areas are contributing to a disproportionate share of EGM losses in already disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Regulation of EGMs could be improved to better protect vulnerable neighbourhoods from EGM harm.

Gambling EGM slots socioeconomic disadvantage public health policy GIS

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