

# Public Health Implications of Online Sports Betting in Canada

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### Overview

What is single-event sports betting?

Why is this an important PH issue?

What are some policy options supporting PH?





Sports Betting: What is it?





- Wager(s) on the outcome(s) (win, loss, tie, etc.) of one or more sporting event (race, fight, game)
- ▶ Parlay betting: A wager on the outcome of 2 or more events
- ► Single event betting: A wager on a single sporting event

Parlay Wagers	Payout
2	2.5x
3	6x
4	10x
5	20x
6	40x

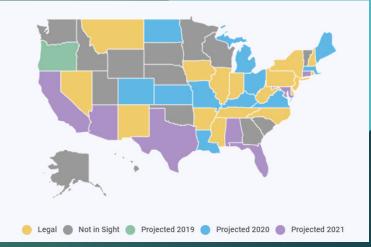
SEB/Moneyline		
Team/Competitor A	3.60	
Team/Competitor B	1.33	





- ▶ 1996: First online sports betting website, Intertops, launches
- ▶ 2000: Betfair website launches as a platform for customers to bet against each other
- ▶ 2002: First live betting website is introduced
- ▶ Since Inception, there have been hundreds of online sportsbooks

#### Sports Betting Legalization in the US



Actionnetwork.com, 2019





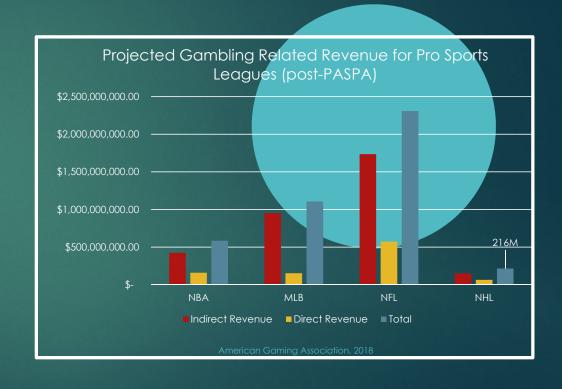
- ▶ Globally: 10s of millions (?)
- ▶ **EU:** Over 12M Europeans involved in online gambling; Sports betting (40.3%) most popular form of online gambling
- ▶ **UK**: Sports betting is the most popular form of gambling after lottery; Online sports betting estimated at ~8% of adult population
- ▶ Australia: Nearly 10% of adult population place sports bets; 34.1% use mobile, 15.1% use computer
- ▶ US: Potentially millions in the first year of broad legalized sports betting





## Economic Scale of Industry

- ▶ **Globally**: \$39.7B USD generated from licensed sportsbooks; projected to reach \$94B USD by 2024
- **EU**: Gross revenue from online gambling estimated at €19.6B
- ▶ **UK**: Online betting, £2B; Football, £1.04B (2018)
- ▶ Australia: Sports betting accounted for over \$1B AUS (2017)





Legalization in Canada

## Sports Betting in Canada



- ▶ 1910 Canadian Criminal Code amended to allow gambling on horse races
- ▶ 1970-1985 Federal government amends CCC to allow provinces to govern gambling operations
- ▶ 1990s-Present rapid expansion of lotteries, casinos, and other forms



oronto.citynews, 2019





- ▶ 2011 Bill C-627 proposed a repeal of paragraph 207 to allow provincial governments to license betting on races, fights or single sporting events or athletic contests.
- ▶ 2016 Bill C-221 repeated the proposed amendment of Bill C-627



The effect of this bill would be to allow us to bet on individual events. There is a great deal of criminal activity that is going on, both inside and outside the country, where moneys are flowing out and Canadians are betting illegally on those activities.



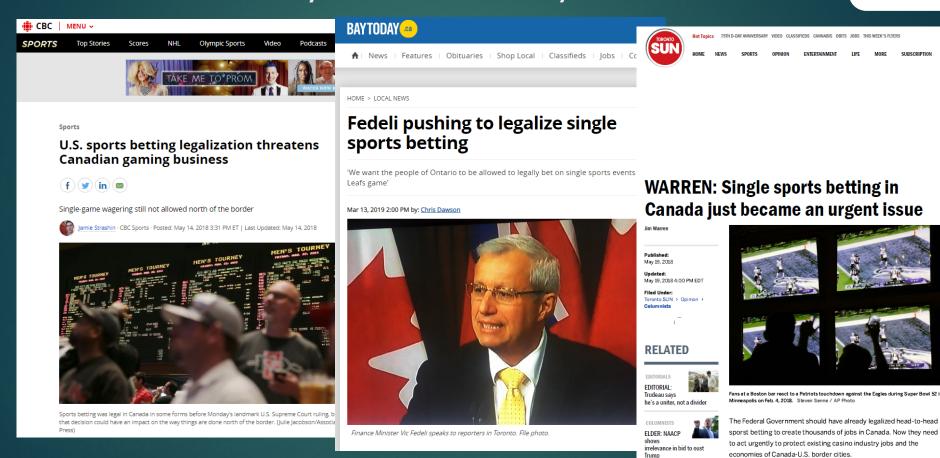
This bill would allow single-event sports betting, which is critical for the Canadian economy. Most important, it would take away \$14 billion of money to organized crime and unregulated offshore betting taking place right now in a market that induces our youth...

Joe Comartin, Windsor-Tecumsek, ON (NDP)

Brian Masse, Windsor-West, ON (NDP)

### Current Policy Advocacy







Why is Sports Betting a PHP Issue?

#### Groundwork for PHP



► A **public health issue** can be framed as any phenomena that affects or threatens the health of a population

#### Exposure → Risk → Outcome

Policy: A formal institutional response characterizing an issue as a problem and providing an indication of how it may be addressed





- Issues: Tobacco, alcohol, physical injury, food safety, etc.
- Social and economic characteristics
   that make abstinence unlikely
- Policy 'solutions' that aim to manage risk and harm





## Gambling Harm

#### General Characteristics of Harm



- Online sports betting is a risky form of gambling
- Live action sports betting is an independent predictor of PG severity
- Daily fantasy sports associated with risk of gambling problems; suicidal thoughts

DOI 10.1007/s10899-015-9542-1 ORIGINAL PAPER Gambling and Problem Gambling in Victoria, Australia: Changes over 5 years Max Abbott<sup>1</sup> · Christine A. Stone<sup>2</sup> · Rosa Billi<sup>3</sup> · Curr Addict Rep (2015) Kristal Yeung<sup>3</sup> DOI 10 1007/s40429-01 TECHNOLOGY AND ADDICTION (M GRIFFITHS, SECTION EDITOR) Online Gambling Addiction: the Relationship Between Internet Gambling and Disordered Gambling Sally M. Gainsbury<sup>1</sup> CrossMark https://doi.org/10.1007/s10899-018-9744-4 ORIGINAL PAPER I-22 © The Author(s) 2018 **In-Play Betting, Sport** Daily Fantasy Sports Players: Gambling, Addiction, Article reuse guidelines: sagepub.com/journals-pe DOI: 10.1177/21674795 **Broadcasts, and Gambling** and Mental Health Problems **Severity: A Survey Study** Lia Nower<sup>1</sup> · Kyle R. Caler<sup>1</sup> · Dylan Pickering<sup>2</sup> · Alex Blaszczynski<sup>2</sup> of Spanish Sports Bettors on the Risks of Betting on **Sport While Watching It** 

J Gambl Stud (2016) 32:47-78

and Ana Estévez

Hibai Lopez-Gonzalez 10, Mark D. Griffiths2,



## Gambling Risk Factors

### Youth and Young Adults





Aifs.gov.au, 2019

- Young adults 18-34 year olds (especially males) most engaged and at highest risk of gambling problems and harms
- Youth 8-17 years old are considered to be at-risk for developing problems assoc. with sports betting

(Abbott et al., 2016; Hing, Russell, & Browne, 2017; Hing, Russell, Vitartas, & Lamont, 2016; Lamont & Hing, 2018; Nower et al., 2018; Russell, Hing, Li, & Vitartas, 2018; Hing et al., 2016; Jenkinson et al., 2018; Elton-Marshall, Leatherdale, & Turner, 2016; Marchica et al., 2017; Zhao, Marchica, Derevensky, & Ivoska, 2018; Marchica et al., 2017)

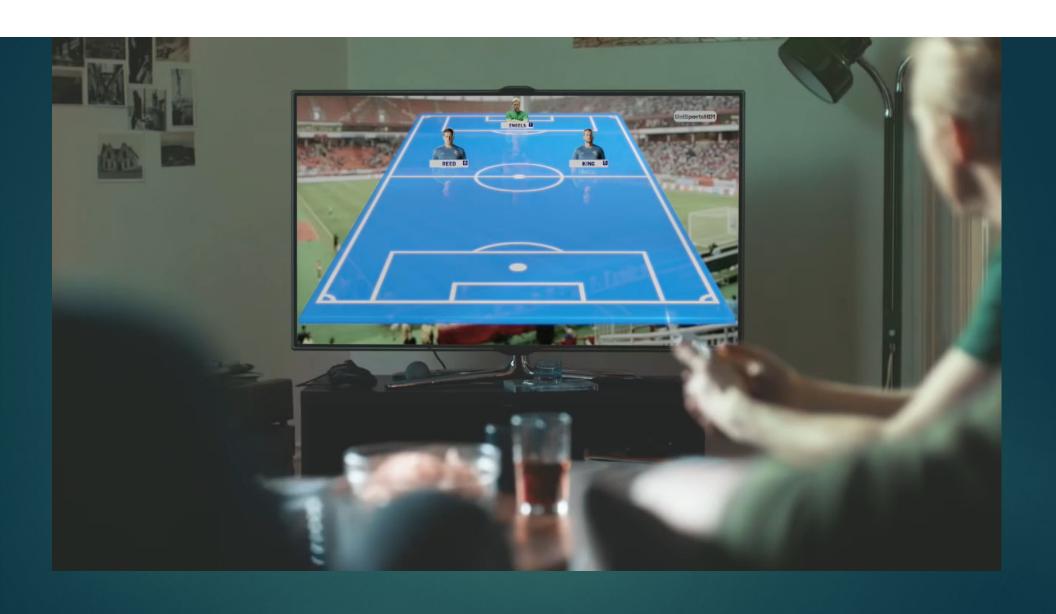
## Marketing and Advertising



- Sports betting advertisements and marketing disproportionately appeal to and influence moderate and high risk gamblers
- Advertised gambling inducements can promote impulsive gambling behaviours, excessive betting
- Integration of sports betting ads and expert commentary, celebrity endorsements, etc. are highly influential



(Hing, Cherney, et al., 2015; Hing, Lamont, et al., 2015; Hing, Russell, et al., 2018; Hing, Sproston, Brook, & Brading, 2017; Newall et al., 2019; Nyemcsok et al., 2018; Parke & Parke, 2019; Pitt, Thomas, & Bestman, 2016; Thomas, Pitt, Bestman, & ..., 2016; Binde & Romild, 2018; Hing, Lamont, Vitartas, & Fink, 2015; Hing, Russell, Li, & Vitartas, 2018; Lamont & Hing, 2018; Hing, Browne, et al., 2018; Jenkinson et al., 2018; Lopez-Gonzalez, Estévez, & Griffiths, 2017; Lopez-Gonzalez & Griffiths, 2018b)



#### Betting Features





igaminatimes.com, 2019

- In-play betting: Ability to place wagers on sporting events during matches
- Micro-event betting: Wagering on minor aspects of match progress
- Cash-out features: Allows players to recycle funds and place further bets
- Instant depositing: Ability to fund accounts instantly or wager using credit

(Gainsbury, 2015; Hing, Russell, et al., 2018; Killick & Griffiths, 2018; Lopez-Gonzalez, Estévez, & Griffiths, 2018c; Lopez-Gonzalez & Griffiths, 2017, 2018a; Lopez-Gonzalez, Griffiths, & Estevez, 2018; Parke & Parke, 2019; Russell, Hing, Browne, Li, & Vitartas, 2018)

### Sports and Culture



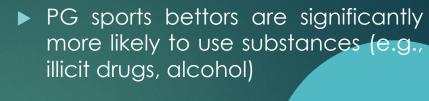
- Sport has deep cultural value in societies around the world
- Sport can have a sanitizing effect on gambling
- Sports betting operations leverage the social and cultural values inherent in sport



Cole Burston, Getty Images 2019

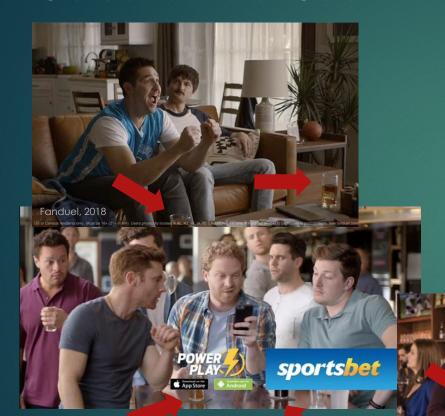
#### Substance Use





In-play betting associated with PG and alcohol use

Marketing and advertising often feature alcohol consumption and junk food



(Lopez-Gonzalez et al., 2017; Lopez-Gonzalez, Estévez, & Griffiths, 2018a; Lopez-Gonzalez & Griffiths, 2018a)



# Public Health Policy Options

#### News Headlines: August, 2019



Aug. 1

• **UK:** Gambling advert ban takes effect from start of Ashes

Aug. 2

 UK: Gambling poses one of the greatest mental health risks in elite sport, player associations warn

Aug. 6

• Portugal: Online gambling up 25%

Aug. 7

• **US:** Washington Redskins to offer gamblingfocused pre-season telecast

Aug. 13

 Australia: Betting apps crafting personalized texts, increasing risk taking Aug. 15

• Australia: Fan of micro-betting? Odds are you're a problem gambler

Aug. 19

 UK: Students 'handing out £5 notes to their peers' to encourage them to use betting apps, report claims

Aug. 20

 UK: Thousands of children exposed to social media gambling ads, study finds

Aug. 22

• **Sweden:** Spelinspektionen fines four more gambling operators





- Research emphasizes youth, marketing and advertising, in-play betting, sports' cultural value, and substance use a key areas of concern
- Mature industries have learned from evidence or experience and instituted key requirements

Country	Recent Ad Policy Measures
EU	Illegal to market or advertise sports betting as a form of investment
Belgium	8pm TV ban on ads and no ads during live sports broadcasts; ban on celebrity endorsements
Australia	Ban on ads during daytime and targeting children; no ads during game and 30min before/after game; no gambling reps as part of commentary team
UK	Restrict ads around live sports events
Italy	Complete ban on sports betting ads

#### Policy Options for Canada?



#### **Prohibit**

- No ads targeting youth
- No ads depicting substance use
- No ads during live sports broadcasts (including uniform sponsors)
- Use of credit to gamble online

#### Restrict

- Ads aired immediately before/after live events
- Gambling inducements in ads must detail cash-out details
- Ads emphasizing skill over chance
- Inducements and bonuses restricted to low, unrenewable amounts
- Live-betting limited or restricted online

#### Require

- Operators and promotions provide RG resources
- Proportion of gross revenue for research and treatment
- Operators meet RG accreditation standards
- Operators implement behav. algorithms to detect and respond to high risk
- All operator staff be trained in RG
- Third-party (e.g., bank) or official ID age verification to activate accounts



# Closing Thoughts



- Pressure is growing to fully legalize sports betting in Canada
  - 2 Such a change represents a significant economic gain for industry and governments alike
  - Risk and harm is a serious public health concern
- Research and policy precedence provides useful evidence for informing domestic policy development



# Thank you!

#### Comments/Questions:

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