

## OP13.6

### General practitioners' beliefs and attitudes on pathological gambling

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**Background & Aim:** Pathological gambling (PG) is an addictive disorder with harm related to the high psychiatric comorbidity and increased suicidal risk. Prevalence rates in general population range from 0.2% to 2.1%, and increases as accessibility to online versions grows continuously. The awareness of the risks of pathological gambling is very low in the general population therefore plus treatments programs are not easy to access. In the era of online gambling offer expansion primary care should have a crucial role in identifying identifying and referring patients to specialized treatment programs and treating at first line when needed and possible. The study aimed to collect data on resources in the field from GPs.

**Method:** 272 (age: 55 +/- 15, men 46,3%, women 53,3%) participating on CME courses were asked using a 24-item questionnaire about their screening practice and knowledge. A control group of 470 patients (age: 60 +/- 10, men 39,7%, women 58,2%) were asked about knowledge on PG.

**Results:** The results state that the vast majority of them are aware of the existence and the potential impact of PG on their patients. However, PG screening is not systematic and their knowledge of adequate treatments or referral methods is scarce. We found significant difference among the two groups in several themes: patients underestimate the addiction potential of PG ( $p < 0,0008$ ), PG could worsen indebtedness in current economical context ( $p < 0,0044$ ), PG should be treated ( $p < 0,004$ ), participation in gambling ( $p < 0,00005$ ).

**Conclusions:** GPs being central to health screening in general, targeted advice and training on short screening tools and better knowledge of referral pathways should be promoted and continued to empower the GP's management skills in a public health approach. There is a need to inform the general population about the risks of problem gambling.