

Never too old to start Gambling-related problems among older adults: risk factors and experimental treatment with focus on women

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Population ageing driven by increasing longevity and low fertility rates is a global phenomenon. In this scenario, gambling participation among older adults appears to be on the increase in recent decades. Due to this rise, problem gambling in this demographic is becoming an important public health concern.

However, we think that there is an absence of understanding of older adult gambling, of age-specific vulnerabilities and risk markers. The purpose of our presentation is to link clinical, social and educational levels as it may be fundamental to develop effective treatments for this population.

After a brief literature review in order to identify risk factors and specific behavioral markers to predict gambling-related problems, our presentation provides suggestions for developing preventive programs and effective treatments for older people, as a cooperation with Milan Social Service and Auser help line points out: finding new indicators, building family and social support, using money control as an instrument to avoid financial collapse.

In this context, a specific and empirical focus on a clinical intervention in “Gioco di donne”*, an Italian experimental gender group, is presented and discussed. The attention is motivated by the strong connection age/women/gambling, and by relevance of this first and unique group experience in Europe, which is also at the origin of the innovative project of the book „Gambling Disorders in Women. An International Female Perspective on Treatment and research“ (eds. H. Bowden-Jones & F. Prever, Routledge, 2017).