MEDIA RELEASE

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ABORIGINAL PROBLEM GAMBLING TRAINING PROGRAM

The NSW Government will fund up to 60 scholarships, six traineeships and three cadetships to train Aboriginal health and welfare workers to target problem gambling in Aboriginal communities.

The first group of scholarship recipients from across the State has been announced under the new $769,180 Aboriginal Problem Gambling Training Program.

Gambling is a significant issue for Aboriginal people with problem gambling higher in indigenous communities than in the general population.

A major barrier to help seeking is that Aboriginal people are often not comfortable dealing with non-Aboriginal services and counsellors due to cultural reasons.

The NSW Government will increase the number of Aboriginal problem gambling counsellors to help address this issue and target problem gambling to reduce its impact in indigenous communities and families.

The Office of Liquor, Gaming & Racing (OLGR) together with the Government’s Responsible Gambling Fund (RGF) are working with the Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at the University of Sydney and TAFE NSW – South Western Sydney Institute to deliver the Aboriginal Problem Gambling Training Program.

The three year program will include:

**Scholarships:** Up to 20 scholarships a year (60 scholarships over three years) to enable Aboriginal health, welfare and community workers to undertake an intensive introduction to problem gambling, resulting in them receiving a Statement of Attainment in Problem Gambling Skills Set qualification. This will enable them to assess the needs of clients with problem gambling issues and refer them to government-funded counselling services. Scholarship recipients will be employed in the Aboriginal health sector or NSW public health system or other relevant service.

**Traineeships:** Up to six traineeships over three years for Aboriginal people to complete a Diploma of Counselling with Problem Gambling Skills Set qualification. Trainees will be employed at one of the 55 RGF-funded NSW Gambling Help problem gambling counselling services that operate across the State.

**Cadetships:** Up to three cadetships will be offered to Aboriginal undergraduates studying in relevant fields such as psychology, social work, social welfare or health sciences who
are interested in working in a Gambling Help service. Cadets will complete the Problem Gambling Skills Set training and undertake an annual 12 week work placement at a Gambling Help service.

The first group of scholarship recipients who will play a valuable role in helping address problem gambling in a range of NSW communities are:

- Trudy Barnard from Ballina
- Harry Beckers from Ballina
- Sharon Brown from Glenfield
- Brendon Chatfield from Narromine
- Karen Crighton from Dungog
- Matthew Cutmore from Inverell
- Troy Davis from Sadleir in Western Sydney
- Kiel Felstead from Goonellabah
- Chantelle Felstead from Goonellabah
- Sophie Gardiner from Caves Beach
- Deegan Hunter from Green Valley
- Tammy Kapeen from Ballina
- Brenda Manton from Goonellabah
- Shaylee Matthews from Metford
- Brittanee Packer from Casino
- Micheal Simpson from Cowra
- Liann Taffe from Adamstown
- John Williams from Cowra
- Andrew Wilson from Liverpool.

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