

Donna Coull

Psychology Intern Placement at Bethany – Evaluation (August 2004 – Present)

As a Psychology Intern my placement at Bethany in the Gambler's Help team required me to learn many new things. I now have a deeper understanding of how gambling affects both the gambler and their families. I had a basic grasp of counselling when I started my placement but since then I have been able to widen my understanding of what is important in counselling. Although there are some techniques and strategies that I have been taught which are unique to counselling gamblers, much of what I have learned can be generalized to other situations which may occur in any individual's everyday life.

I also have a better understanding of how a team of counsellors can work together to achieve the best results for both the gambler and the team. Bethany is a caring environment where both the needs of the staff and the needs of the client are balanced carefully. Everybody that I have met at Bethany has been friendly and understanding, in terms of explaining new things and going over how strategies work, who they are appropriate for and how to apply those strategies in a counselling situation.

During my time at Bethany I have had a chance to join in many of the different activities that the Gambler's Help team have conducted. Some of these activities included: helping to launch a new information pack in the Geelong region that was aimed at helping increase the understanding of how gambling affects young people. I also attended the Geelong Cup with the Gambler's Help team where we were serving free tea and coffee. The main aim of the day was to raise awareness of problem gambling and how individuals can get help if they think that they have a problem.

Overall, I have found my placement at Bethany to be an extremely valuable experience I have been able to increase my counselling skills and knowledge, as well as participating in some community education activities. During this time I have also met some warm and friendly people and been welcomed into a team of people who have made me feel like a member of the team.