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Addiction: The family infection

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Graphic novels have since made a comeback from WWII as an innovative tool for public health initiatives from HIV to diabetes management. Modern technology is very visual, shortening one's attention span for text, therefore, graphic novels are a topical medium to disseminate public health initiatives. In this study, a graphic novel is explored as a public health tool depicting the harms of slot machine use (pokies) in New Zealand with the ability to embrace and illuminate social and cultural norms. Given this, the graphic novel presents four birds unique to New Zealand (Kiwi bird, Yellow Penguin, Kea and the Morepork owl) to symbolize four main ethnic groups affected by pokies. All four characters each have someone affected by pokie harms so they bond together to decrease the harms from pokies in their community. It's hypothesized that this graphic novel is

a 'user friendly' medium to encourage participants to talk about harms of slot machine play, potentially promoting social change. Similarly, animation has helped reduce expenditure of slot machine play. These two theoretical paradigms, narrative and social learning theory, aim to drive this methodological process. The narrative paradigm has been known to be a better catalyst for disseminating knowledge for behaviour change compared to only providing lists of facts and empirical data. And social cognitive theory provides four role models within the narrative for change. Focus groups were employed to discuss the feasibility of this approach to the New Zealand culture amongst educators and health professionals. Results are discussed.

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