Advisory panel on problem gambling convenes

PROBLEM gambling and harmful addictions are to be examined by an international advisory panel for the National Addictions Management Centre (NAMC) and the National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) which convenes in Singapore from today until Friday.

The panel, which will analyse global trends and highlight important issues, intends to advise on prevention and control strategies to combat problem gambling as well as drug, alcohol and behavioural addiction.

The panel was set up by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports.

Other issues on the agenda include identifying research areas as well as infrastructural, manpower and clinical development of the proposed NAMC.

The panel is chaired by Goh Chee Leok, a senior consultant with MOH and the National Skin Centre, and David Chan, interim dean for Singapore Management University's School of Social Sciences.

The panel also has eight overseas members, selected for their experience and expertise in high-risk behaviour. Members include Rachel Volberg of US-based Gemini Research Ltd and Alex Blaszczynski, chair in psychology at the University of Sydney.

The panel will submit their recommendations to MOH and NCPG by the end of the month.

On target: Besides problem gambling, the panel will also look at drug, alcohol and behavioural addiction