

## **ANNOUNCEMENT**

### **Responsible Gambling Trust commissions the Institute of Public Policy Research to study the cost to government of gambling-related harm**

**London, July 25:** The Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT) has commissioned the Institute of Public Policy Research (IPPR) to estimate the cost to government of gambling-related harm.

As well as funding treatment for over 7,700 people a year affected by gambling, RGT is working to persuade all levels of government to consider gambling-related harm as a public health issue, both to encourage new partnerships to deliver preventative campaigns, and to secure better access to NHS treatment for more severe or complex cases.

This study complements a project being undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers to define and measure gambling-related harm more generally.

The findings of the IPPR study will be presented at RGT's annual Harm Minimisation conference on 7-8<sup>th</sup> December 2016

**Marc Etches, Chief Executive of RGT** said:

"Given the impact of gambling is felt across a wide range of central government organisations, and at every level of government from local authorities to Whitehall, there is no clear picture of its overall cost to the public sector.

We've asked the IPPR to apply its skills to generate a robust estimate of the range into which they believe this cost falls, in order to inform ministers and other decision-makers better, be they in Westminster, Cardiff, Edinburgh or town halls across Great Britain.

The work will highlight where there is the potential to make considerable savings, providing the basis of a business case for further investment by the state, in partnership with charities such as RGT, to reduce the level of gambling-related harm through public health messages, and for local commissioners to consider it as a higher priority for treatment within the National Health Service."

**Craig Thorley, Research Fellow, Public Services at the IPPR** said:

"Problem-gambling in the UK contributes to a wide range of social and economic costs to individuals and their families.

However we do not have a clear estimate of the cost to government, from additional financial burden that problem-gambling places on public services, to lost tax revenue and additional welfare payments. To calculate an estimate of this, we will conduct a rigorous analysis of available data, and engage widely with stakeholders in government and civil society.

We hope this will help to inform the debate about how best to reduce gambling-related harm.”

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**NOTES TO EDITORS**

- The Responsible Gambling Trust is the leading charity in the UK committed to minimising gambling-related harm. As an independent national charity funded by donations from the gambling industry, the Responsible Gambling Trust funds education, prevention and treatment services and commissions research to broaden public understanding of gambling-related harm and inform public policy. The aim is to stop people getting into problems with their gambling, and ensure that those that do develop problems receive fast and effective treatment and support. Click here to find out more: <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/>
- The Responsible Gambling Trust raises over £7 million each year in voluntary contributions from the gambling industry operating in Great Britain. This donation based system was proposed under the Gambling Act 2005 and is prescribed by the Gambling Commission in its Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice.
- The Responsible Gambling Trust's programme of treatment, education, harm prevention and research are guided by the National Responsible Gambling Strategy, which is defined by the independent Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB) and endorsed by the Gambling Commission. The RGSB, the Gambling Commission and RGT work together under the terms of an agreement in place since 2012: <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/media/1216/statementofintent.pdf>.
- All RGT research is governed by its Research Committee of only those trustees who are independent of the gambling industry. Research is conducted under the terms of a 'Research Commissioning and Governance Procedure' agreed in 2016 by the RGSB, the Gambling Commission and RGT: <http://www.responsiblegamblingtrust.org.uk/media/1270/research-commissioning-and-governance-procedure-may-2016-final.pdf>.