

GambleAware

6th Annual reducing gambling-related harms conference

The King's Fund, London, 5 December 2018

GambleAware hosted its sixth annual reducing gambling-related harms conference at the King's Fund. Over 250 delegates and 30 speakers attended the event, with a diverse audience comprising delegates working in the gambling industry, academics and researchers, treatment and education professionals, policy-makers and corporate representatives.

The theme for this year's conference was diversity in relation to gambling-related harms in Great Britain. Attendees were welcomed by Liz Barclay, the event Moderator, and Kate Lampard CBE, the Chair of GambleAware's Board of trustees, before the day was kicked off by Mims Davies MP, the recently appointed Minister for Sport and Civil Society (DCMS). Giving her first [speech](#) in her new role, Mims echoed the words of her predecessor, Tracey Crouch, in warning the gambling industry to take gambling-related harms seriously.

"We want the voluntary system to work – but if it doesn't, we do not rule out other ways of funding support, including a mandatory levy. The profits of gambling operators aren't my prime concern. Ensuring problem gamblers have access to the right treatment is."

Neil McArthur, Chief Executive of the Gambling Commission, then emphasised the importance of a diverse approach in the development of the successor to the National Responsible Gambling Strategy, before Kate Bosomworth, Chief Marketing Officer at M&C Saatchi, used her own experience of running marketing campaigns such as This Girl Can to argue that better and more inclusive work would be produced by organisations that took diversity seriously.

Delegates then turned their attention to the first issue of the day – Diversity in Health – with a [speech](#) from Steven Lacey, Director of The Outsiders, arguing that the white working class is a key audience for considering gambling-related harms that should be respected and not ignored. This was followed by a panel discussion bringing together different perspectives from treatment of problem gambling, including GambleAware's Commissioning Manager Ruth Champion. The panel discussion was followed by a series of questions from the floor, answered by the most relevant panellist.

After a break, Janine Robinson of the Responsible Gambling Council, Canada, [introduced](#) the Diversity in Research session by calling for a multidisciplinary approach to researching gambling related-harms. She argued that greater diversity in research would lead to more meaningful conclusions that better fit the real-world contexts that

gambling-related harms happen in. The subsequent panel developed this line of argument, with Bianca Bailey Wilson, Research and Impact Manager at GambleAware, emphasising the value of cultural understanding in research and taking an individualised approach to researching underrepresented groups.

After enjoying the opportunity to network over lunch, Rosena Allin-Khan MP, Shadow Minister (DCMS) (Sport) refocused delegates' minds by reiterating Labour's commitment for a whistle-to-whistle ban on gambling ads on TV. Marie-Claire Isaaman, Chief Executive of Women in Games then [introduced](#) the Diversity in Consumers session with a speech exploring diversity challenges and common ground within the gambling and video games industries. The following panel was comprised of representatives from the gambling industry who reflected on the diversity in their own consumer bases and the impact that had on the running of their businesses.

The final session on Diversity in Business was [opened](#) by Micky Swindale, Partner at KPMG, who presented the business case for diversity. Her conclusion – that diversity was good for businesses' bottom lines – was largely endorsed by the panel discussion that followed, with the qualification that it was important not to be tokenistic and to make diverse appointments with clear thinking about how their particular perspectives would be beneficial rather than simply because they ticked the right boxes.

The conference was concluded by a networking reception.