

GambleAware[®]

**KEEPING PEOPLE
SAFE FROM
GAMBLING HARMS**

A briefing note

July 2020

THE ISSUE

- Gambling is a serious **public health issue** in Great Britain. Official statistics estimate that two million adults are experiencing some level of gambling harm, including 340,000 'problem gamblers'¹. Research commissioned by GambleAware indicates these estimates of gambling harm may be low².
- **Gambling disorder** is defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as an addictive behaviour with implications for mental health³, and for some, gambling addiction can result in suicide.
- **350,000 (11%) 11 - 16 year olds are reported as having spent their own money on gambling in the last week.** This rate is lower than for young people drinking alcohol (16%), but higher than for those using e-cigarettes (7%), smoking tobacco cigarettes (6%) or taking illegal drugs (5%). Overall, 1.7% of 11 - 16 year olds are classified as 'problem gamblers' and a further 2.7% are 'at risk'⁴.
- The first ever **Treatment Needs and Gap Analysis** for Great Britain has found that one in two people with gambling disorder have not accessed any treatment or support, and highlights barriers to accessing treatment and support, including a lack of awareness of available services, social stigma, and a reluctance to admit gambling problems⁵.
- Referred to as the '**hidden addiction**', the outward signs of **gambling disorder** often go unnoticed by family and friends, and are also largely 'hidden' from policymakers, health & advice professionals.

1. <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/survey-data/Gambling-behaviour-in-Great-Britain-2016.pdf>
2. <https://about.gambleaware.org/media/2191/treatment-needs-and-gap-analysis-in-great-britain-a-synthesis-of-findings1.pdf>
3. <https://icd.who.int/browse11/l-m/en#/http%3a%2f%2fid.who.int%2fcd%2fentfity%2f1041487064>
4. <https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/PDF/Young-People-Gambling-Report-2019.pdf>
5. <https://about.gambleaware.org/media/2191/treatment-needs-and-gap-analysis-in-great-britain-a-synthesis-of-findings1.pdf>

HOW GAMBLEAWARE IS ADDRESSING THE ISSUE

Gambling harms are best understood as matters of health and wellbeing, and keeping people safe from gambling harms requires a public health response, including:

- **Primary prevention** - universal promotion of a safer environment
- **Secondary prevention** - selective intervention for those who may be 'at risk'
- **Tertiary prevention** - direct support for those with gambling disorder or for those who may be directly affected.

Guided by this public health model, GambleAware commissions prevention and treatment services in England, Scotland and Wales which is underpinned by research and evaluation. GambleAware works to ensure **evidence-informed services** are developed according to need within a **robust and accountable system**, and that funding is allocated efficiently and independently.

Effective prevention of gambling harms requires a coherent and co-ordinated '**whole systems approach**' involving partnership with the NHS, public health agencies, local authorities, and voluntary sector organisations. This will ensure appropriate referral routes and care pathways are in place for individuals in need of support, including treatment, to receive the right intervention at the right time.

The value of this collaborative approach is acknowledged in the **NHS Mental Health Implementation Plan, 2019-24** (pp 40-41) in which GambleAware is recognised as an NHS England partner in relation to the NHS commitment to opening 15 specialist problem gambling clinics in the next five years⁶. In Scotland and Wales similar discussions are taking place between the NHS and GambleAware.

6. <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/nhs-mental-health-implementation-plan-2019-20-2023-24.pdf>

1 Commissioning the National Gambling Treatment Service

- GambleAware commissions a network of NHS and voluntary sector organisations to deliver the **National Gambling Treatment Service** across Great Britain, free at the point of delivery. The National Gambling Treatment Service works alongside other local agencies, in both the statutory and voluntary sectors, to meet the needs of individuals and their communities, promoting a place-based approach and developing referral routes into treatment.
- GambleAware is leading the development of systems of accountability for the National Gambling Treatment Service. These will assure the safe, effective delivery of services, to report on activity, and to develop the evidence base which will inform the future expansion and development of services. Priorities for future commissioning will be guided by the recent **Treatment Needs and Gap Analysis** and the involvement of those with **lived experience** of gambling harms.
- A key feature of the National Gambling Treatment Service is the **National Gambling Helpline**, operated by **GamCare**, which is accessible online and by telephone 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It provides the easiest and quickest way for most people to be connected with the service that can best help them. Some people prefer to access all the help that they need via the Helpline, because it can be accessed remotely. This includes computerised Cognitive Behavioural Therapy.
- The National Gambling Treatment Service includes a psychiatrist-led service provided by the **Central and North-West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)** that GambleAware has funded for a decade. A second NHS service commissioned by GambleAware has recently opened, delivered by **Leeds & York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**. These services are designed to help people with more serious and complex needs, including people receiving NHS treatment for other conditions.

- Twelve-week residential rehabilitation is available for those people whose gambling addiction is so strong that community-based treatment is not sufficient. A Retreat & Counselling service is also offered to people whose personal circumstances make attendance at residential rehabilitation difficult. This treatment is delivered by the **Gordon Moody Association**.
- The majority of gambling treatment across Britain is provided by a network of local providers, coordinated by **GamCare**, which offers community-based counselling and psychotherapy at locations which are convenient for most people to attend. This includes both individual and group work.
- The National Gambling Treatment Service works with the **criminal justice system** to reduce reoffending related to gambling. To understand better what works, GambleAware has commissioned CNWL to provide screening and treatment for gambling problems across all prisons in Surrey.
- The validation and analysis of output and outcome data is undertaken by **ViewItUK** using procedures similar to those used for the National Drug Treatment Monitoring System on behalf of Public Health England (PHE).

GambleAware is working with the **Care Quality Commission** to develop plans for the inspection of gambling treatment services.

GambleAware has commissioned the **Primary Care Gambling Service** to develop a competency framework for gambling treatment in primary care. This will set out the skills and experience needed by clinicians.

In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, the **National Gambling Treatment Service** treated **10,000** people and the Helpline received **30,000** calls and online chats. Waiting times are short, and compare favourably to NHS IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) mental health services. Routine monitoring and evaluation demonstrates that current treatment is effective.

GambleAware also runs the **BeGambleAware.org** website which helps **6.2 MILLION** visitors a year, and signposts to a wide range of support services.

£30
MILLION of funding
is currently allocated to go
toward this activity

2 Public health campaigns & practical support to local services

- GambleAware produces public health campaigns on a national scale to support local services and to lead on awareness and behaviour change campaigns such as **Bet Regret** – the preventative public health campaign aimed at encouraging regular sports bettors to think twice about gambling when drunk, bored or chasing losses.
- GambleAware launched a new campaign in March to raise awareness of the **National Gambling Treatment Service** via digital media, radio, pubs, motorway service stations, and in GP surgeries and health publications.
- GambleAware has published a '**brief intervention guide**' and an '**e-Learning**' package for professionals who are non-specialists in the treatment of gambling disorder, and is currently working with the **Personal Finance Research Centre** at the University of Bristol to produce resources that focus on preventing gambling disorder across the financial sector.
- Other partnerships include working with the **Royal Society for Public Health (RSPH)** to improve knowledge of gambling harms amongst public health professionals through programmes which support the **Make Every Contact Count+ (MECC+)** initiative. GambleAware also works with **Citizens Advice** to train debt advisers and other frontline workers (for example in housing associations, local authorities, family support services) across England, Scotland and Wales, to identify and offer support to people who may be experiencing gambling harms.
- GambleAware funds **RSPH** to convene a Gambling Health Alliance of professional health-related bodies to promote greater awareness and share perspectives about preventing gambling harms.
- GambleAware has commissioned **Fast Forward** to make it possible for every young person in Scotland to have access to gambling education and prevention opportunities. Through partnerships with organisations such as **Demos**, the **PSHE Association** and **Parent Zone** a range of resources for teachers, parents and carers are available on the GambleAware website.

The **Bet Regret** campaign reaches **2 MILLION** men aged 16 – 34 years with high campaign recognition against those at risk who rate the campaign as engaging and relevant with strong message outtake⁷.

81% of the Bet Regret campaign audience agreed that **BeGambleAware.org** does a good job at providing useful information about gambling⁷.

Parent Zone 'Gaming or Gambling' resources have reached nearly **400,000** parents, and the 'Know the Stakes' resources have been accessed by over **130,000** young people.

Fast Forward has delivered training to around **1,500** practitioners in the parenting, employability and informal education sectors, and reached **15,000** pupils via more than **100** schools through peer-based theatre performances in secondary schools.

3,200 professionals have used the **RSPH** eLearning to enable them to identify and respond effectively to people experiencing gambling harms.

Citizens Advice in England and Wales has screened over **15,000** clients and aims to deliver training to **13,000** professionals over two years.

A new campaign signposting to the **National Gambling Treatment Service** via the Helpline was seen to be relevant and well targeted, as **71%** of people felt contacting the National Gambling Treatment Service would help someone with concerns about gambling.

GambleAware funded the **Personal Finance Research Centre** to explore the uptake and effectiveness of bank card gambling blockers, which included recommendations such as banks introducing a **48** hour lock on blockers and a cross-sector awareness campaign.

£7 MILLION
of funding is currently allocated to go toward this activity

7. Ipsos Mori Tracking Study Wave 1-4 Campaign Audience of frequent male gamblers aged 16-44, betting on sports or online casino in the past 4 weeks.

3 Commissioning research & evaluation to improve knowledge of what works in prevention

- GambleAware is focused on generating the '**what works for whom**' evidence to support and inform education and early intervention approaches and tools, and treatment & support service design and commissioning.
- The first **Treatment Needs & Gap Analysis in Great Britain** was published in May 2020 examining the gap between the number of people accessing treatment & support, and the number estimated to be in need of treatment & support.
- To maintain up to date data and insight on the demand for treatment & support GambleAware will be repeating this as an **Annual GB Treatment & Support Demand Survey**. Using different sampling methods and approaches over time the work will contribute to the knowledge base about survey accuracy in examining gambling behaviours, harms and treatment and support needs.
- YouGov's **Women in Focus** report, published in July 2020, reanalyses data from their October 2019 Treatment Needs & Gap Analysis to explore the use of, and demand for treatment and support services among women.
- Recognising the intersectionality of marginalisation and exclusion, re-analysis of this data with a focus on the **Treatment & Support Needs of People from BAME communities** is underway. This will be informed by a review of the existing evidence base in relation to **Race, Ethnicity and Gambling**, to be published in September.
- In other areas of research, August 2020 also sees publication of a commissioned report by Kings College London exploring '**what works**' in **creating infrastructures and engagement methods for people with lived experience** in public health, health and social care.

- All our research is independently commissioned, monitored and reviewed. Approved by the **National Institute for Health Research (NIHR)** as an NIHR non-commercial partner, we follow Research Council Policy regarding research ethics, encouraging and funding open access publication in academic journals and data reuse.

IMPACT ON CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION:

The Frameworks for understanding and measuring gambling harms amongst adults⁸ and children and young people⁹ have provided a shared language and focus (away from individual 'problem gambling' to wider 'gambling harms') enabling engagement with and by other sectors and professionals.

IMPACT ON SERVICE PROVISION: The **Gambling Related Suicide Scoping Study** contributed to the extended operating hours of the National Gambling Helpline from October 2019.

IMPACT ON REGULATION:

Interim findings from the **Impact of Advertising & Marketing on Children, Young People & Vulnerable Groups** research led the Advertising Standards Authority and Committee of Advertising Practice to take a number of initiatives such as identifying and addressing gambling ads that, according to the research, fail to comply with the Advertising Code. Also to engage with the Gambling Commission about enforcement arrangements in relation to concerns around e-sports gambling.

IMPACT ON CAPACITY-BUILDING: GambleAware has funded research programmes in over **30** British universities. We have also funded **17** PhDs, with 5 currently in delivery. This work has made significant original contributions to knowledge around gambling.

8. <https://about.gambleaware.org/media/1757/measuring-gambling-related-harms-10-july-2018.pdf>

9. <https://about.gambleaware.org/media/1937/measuring-grh-in-cyp-a-framework-for-action.pdf>

£4 MILLION
of funding is currently allocated to go toward this activity

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

Keeping people safe from gambling harms requires a **coherent, co-ordinated and well-funded 'whole systems approach'** to prevention and treatment, which is underpinned by effective partnership working.

The recent pledge of up to £100 million from the gambling industry to fund treatment services for people experiencing gambling harm will enable GambleAware to continue to work in partnership with the NHS, public health agencies, local authorities and voluntary sector organisations across England, Scotland and Wales to further develop the **National Gambling Treatment Service**. A new five-year strategy will be published in March 2021. In the meantime, GambleAware will continue to focus on:

- Extending the **National Gambling Treatment Service** in collaboration with the NHS, public health bodies, healthcare professionals, voluntary organisations and local authorities.
- Public health campaigns on a national scale such as **Bet Regret** to help build resilience against gambling harms for children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Providing **practical support** to GP services, debt and other advice agencies, mental health services, prisons, military personnel, professional sports, schools and youth workers.
- GambleAware's **Lived Experience Programme** including facilitating a special interest group for people who have been through treatment for their own gambling harms and collaborating on establishing an inclusive GB-wide membership network for all who have experienced gambling harms.
- Evaluating '**what works for whom**' via a framework that measures consequential change, informs service design and can be widely shared.

ABOUT GAMBLEAWARE

Regulated by the Charity Commission for England and Wales, and the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR), GambleAware is wholly independent and has a framework agreement with the Gambling Commission¹⁰ to deliver the National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms within the context of arrangements based on voluntary donations from the gambling industry.

Guided by an **independent expert board of trustees**, the majority of whom work in the health sector, evidence-informed services are commissioned according to need within a robust and accountable system of governance processes and procedures that ensures the industry has no influence over our commissioning decisions.

Kate Lampard, CBE - Chair of Board of Trustees, lead non executive of DHSC board

Rachel Pearce - Regional Director of Commissioning, NHSE South West

Professor Sian Griffiths, OBE - Associate Non-Executive of the Board of PHE and a former President of the UK Faculty of Public Health, and Deputy Chair of trustees and Chair of Safer Gambling campaign

Paul Simpson - Chief Finance Officer & Deputy Chief Executive, Surrey & Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust

Saffron Cordery - Director of Policy & Strategy and Deputy Chief Executive, NHS Providers

Professor Marcantonio Spada - Professor of Addictive Behaviours and Mental Health at London South Bank University & editor-in-chief of the international peer-reviewed journal, Addictive Behaviors

Michelle Highman - Chief Executive, The Money Charity

Professor Anthony Kessel - Clinical Director at NHS England and NHS Improvement; Honorary Professor & Co-ordinator of the International Programme for Ethics, Public Health & Human Rights at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

GambleAware is a member of a joint-working group on preventing gambling harms co-chaired by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and Department for Health and Social Care, and a member of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy Advisory Group. GambleAware has established advisory boards in Wales and Scotland to guide future commissioning plans in those nations.

10. <https://about.gambleaware.org/media/1211/statement-of-intent-document-final-with-logo-v2.pdf>



When you're there, but not there.

We are here to help. Chat to us online or call for free, confidential advice and start to regain control of your gambling after one conversation.

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