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## PRESS RELEASE

### NEW REPORT REVEALS TREATMENT HELPED 90% OF NATIONAL GAMBLING TREATMENT SERVICE USERS REDUCE THEIR PROBLEM GAMBLING SCORE

- GambleAware has today launched its first ever detailed report on the National Gambling Treatment Service which revealed nine out of ten (90%) clients who completed treatment between April 2019 and March 2020 showed improvement on the PGSI scale, which is used to measure severity of gambling disorder.
- The report also showed that among those defined as ‘problem gamblers’<sup>1</sup> at the start of treatment, three in five (60%) were no longer in this category at the end of treatment.
- The analysis found for those clients that ended their treatment, their CORE-10 score, a measure of psychological distress, reduced by an average of eight points, with 74% classed as below the threshold of “moderate” distress. For clients who completed their treatment, four in five (86%) improved their CORE-10 score.
- The report illustrated that between 2015/16 and 2019/20 the proportion of clients completing scheduled treatment increased from 59% to 69% whilst the proportion dropping out of treatment decreased from 35% to 24%.
- The annual statistics showed that over two thirds of gamblers (71%) using the treatment service reported having a debt due to their gambling, with almost half (45%) having debts over £5,000 or were bankrupt or in an Individual Voluntary Arrangement.

**London, 29 October 2020:** GambleAware has today published a new report, using data collated by ViewItUK, on the National Gambling Treatment Service (NGTS). Commissioned by GambleAware, NGTS is a network of organisations working together to provide confidential treatment and support for anyone experiencing gambling harms. This is the first time GambleAware have published a detailed report outlining statistics for the National Gambling Treatment Service.

The research revealed nine in ten (90%) of the 9,008 clients who completed treatment between April 2019 and March 2020 showed improvement on the PGSI scale<sup>2</sup>. In particular when reviewing how many clients were classified as ‘problem gamblers’<sup>3</sup> at the start vs at the end of treatment, it

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<sup>1</sup> The criteria for PGSI classification as a ‘problem gambler’ is a score within the range of between 8 and 27.

<sup>2</sup> The PGSI is the most widely used measure of problem gambling in Great Britain. It consists of nine items and each item is assessed on a four-point scale: never, sometimes, most of the time, almost always.

<sup>3</sup> The criteria for PGSI classification as a ‘problem gambler’ is a score within the range of between 8 and 27.

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was found that 60% were no longer defined as such<sup>4</sup> by the end. The research also highlighted the average treatment length lasted eight weeks.

Another severity measure used by the services, alongside the PGSI score, is the CORE-10 scale, which is a survey used to monitor psychological distress. The researchers found for those clients that ended their treatment, their CORE-10 score reduced by an average of eight points, with 74% classed as below the threshold of “moderate” distress. For clients who completed their treatment, four in five (86%) improved their CORE-10 score.

The report found that 90% of referrals for treatment were self-made and that 50% of individuals were seen within three days of referral and 75% within eight days. It was also found that between 2015/16 and 2019/20 the proportion of clients completing scheduled treatment increased from 59% to 69% whilst the proportion dropping out of treatment decreased from 35% to 24%.

When examining the profile of the gamblers using the service between April 2019 and March 2020 the analysis found:

- A total of 9,008 individuals<sup>5</sup> were treated within the National Gambling Treatment Service and three quarters of clients (75%) were male.
- Almost nine tenths (89%) were from a white ethnic background and the next most commonly reported ethnic backgrounds were Asian or Asian British (5%), followed by Black or Black British (3%).
- Clients had an average age of 34 years at time of referral, with 25% saying they started problem gambling by the age of 19 and 50% said it was by the age of 24.

The report went on to illustrate on average gamblers reported spending £2,102 on gambling in the month before assessment. It also found the majority of gamblers (71%) using the treatment service reported having a debt due to their gambling. Almost half (45%) had debts over £5,000 or were bankrupt or in an Individual Voluntary Arrangement (IVA) and one in ten (16%) reported a debt of £20,000-£99,999.

**Marc Etches, GambleAware CEO, commented:** *“The publication of this detailed analysis, of the impact the National Gambling Treatment Service can have on people receiving support, is a significant milestone. GambleAware commissioned ViewItUK to independently collate and analyse output and outcome data, which will allow GambleAware to rigorously evaluate these outcomes on the basis of robust and comparable evidence.*

*“We are committed to informing the development of best practice and outstanding care for those experiencing gambling harms in Great Britain, and the data reporting system we are pioneering is designed to be made available to the NHS, Public Health, local authorities and other statutory and voluntary sector agencies to meet the needs of local communities.”*

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<sup>4</sup> The criteria for PGSI classification as a ‘problem gambler’ is a score within the range of between 8 and 27. Scores between 3 and 7 represent ‘moderate risk’ gambling and a score of 1 or 2 represents ‘low risk’. The 60% refers to those with a new score between 0-7.

<sup>5</sup>84% of this 9,008 were gamblers, with the rest affected others (13%) or those at risk of developing a problem (2%).

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GambleAware has also published the findings for the 2018/19 report on the National Gambling Treatment Service alongside this.

GambleAware runs a campaign to raise awareness of the treatment available through the National Gambling Treatment Service, which you can read more about [here](#).

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## About the Report

- This is the first time GambleAware have published a report detailing statistics for the [National Gambling Treatment Service](#).
- The data was collated and analysed by ViewItUK before being shared with GambleAware.
- The data for the 2019/20 period presented within the report covers submissions from the following organisations<sup>6</sup>: GamCare<sup>7</sup>, Gordon Moody Association, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (London Problem Gambling Clinic).
- The collection of data on clients receiving treatment from the National Gambling Treatment Service is managed through a nationally co-ordinated dataset known as the Data Reporting Framework (DRF), initiated in 2015.
- The report looks at services between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.
- The 2018/19 report has also been published.

## About ViewItUK

- ViewItUK Ltd is a University of Manchester start-up company, supported by GC Business Growth Hub, specialising in data management and analysis to provide a platform for simple reporting.
- The company originates from the team that provides National Statistics production and validation for National Drug Treatment Monitoring Service outputs on behalf of Public Health England.

## About GambleAware

- GambleAware is an independent charity (Charity No. England & Wales 1093910, Scotland SC049433) that champions a public health approach to preventing gambling harms – see <http://about.gambleaware.org/>

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<sup>6</sup> The NHS Northern Gambling Service, provided by Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust opened mid-year. Figures from the service will be incorporated into NGTS statistics for 2020/21, when the service has been operational for one full reporting period.

<sup>7</sup> In addition, GamCare operates the National Gambling Helpline which offers telephone and online live chat support providing immediate support to individuals and referral into the treatment service. GamCare also offer information and advice via their website, moderated forums, and online group chatrooms. These services are not within the scope of data presented in this report.

# GambleAware

- GambleAware is a commissioner of integrated prevention, education, and treatment services on a national scale, with over £40 million of grant funding under active management. In partnership with gambling treatment providers, GambleAware has spent several years methodically building structures for commissioning a coherent system of brief intervention and treatment services, with clearly defined care pathways and established referral routes to and from the NHS – a National Gambling Treatment Service.
- The National Gambling Treatment Service brings together a National Gambling Helpline and a network of locally-based providers across Great Britain that works with partner agencies and people with lived experience to design and deliver a system, which meets the needs of individuals. This system delivers a range of treatment services, including brief intervention, counselling (delivered either face-to-face or online), residential programmes and psychiatrist-led care.
- In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, figures show that the National Gambling Treatment Service treated 7, 676 people and this is projected to rise to 24,000 people a year by 2021. Helpline activity is currently running at about 30,000 calls and on-line chats per annum. GambleAware also runs the website BeGambleAware.org which helps 6.2 million visitors a year and signposts to a wide range of support services.
- GambleAware produces public health campaigns including Bet Regret. A Safer Gambling Board, including representatives from Public Health England, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport, and GambleAware, is responsible for the design and delivery of a campaign based on best practice in public health education. The Bet Regret campaign is being funded through specific, additional donations to the charity, in line with a commitment given to the government by the broadcasting, advertising, and gambling industries. See <https://about.gambleaware.org/prevention/safer-gambling-campaign/>