?Charities Join Forces to Support Problem Gamblers Feeling Suicidal

Tuesday 6 September, 2016

National problem gambling support charity GamCare are partnering with suicide support specialists Maytree to host an hour-long live chatroom for problem gamblers and affected others on Friday 9th September, from 2pm- 3pm, ahead of World Suicide Prevention Day.

The World Health Organization estimates that over 800,000 people die by suicide each year, while many more may attempt to take their lives. The theme for World Suicide Prevention Day in 2016 is 'Connect, Communicate and Care'.

In 2015/16 the National Gambling HelpLine, operated by GamCare and providing information, advice and support to anyone affected by problem gambling, signposted nearly 300 people to specialist services to help them cope with suicidal thoughts or feelings. GamCare also provides specialist counselling nationwide to support problem gamblers, as well as family or friends affected by problem gambling.

GamCare and Maytree are co-hosting a live chatroom to give information, advice and support to anyone who has experienced suicidal thoughts or feelings because of their gambling behaviour, or who is seeking support for someone close to them because of an issue with gambling, including parents unsure how to support their loved ones.

Stephen Cunningham, Frontline Services Manager at GamCare, says: *"For many people gambling is not a harmful activity, but for some it can become a serious problem. We do hear from people in crisis, when a downward spiral has continued for some time and they feel like there is no other way out.*

We urge anyone who needs support to reach out – there is help available, whatever the problem. This chatroom is designed for you to share emotional support with others in a similar situation, with guidance from our moderator and a member of the Maytree team."

To participate in the chatroom, register as a GamCare Forum member at http://www.gamcare.org.uk/user/register and join at **2pm on Friday 9th September**.

For more information visit www.gamcare.org.uk

ENDS

For more information or accompanying images please contact Catherine Sweet, Marketing and Communications Manager, at catherine.sweet@gamcare.org.uk or on 020 7801 7000.

Notes to editors:

GamCare – Working to minimise gambling-related harm

- GamCare is the leading national provider of information, advice, support and free counselling for the prevention and treatment of problem gambling. Our expert services are confidential and non-judgemental.
- GamCare operates the National Gambling HelpLine on Freephone **0808 8020 133** or via web chat at www.gamcare.org.uk. Advisers are available 8am – Midnight, seven days a week. Moderated chatrooms are also open daily, and peer-to-peer support is available through the GamCare Forum. For more information on GamCare counselling services, visit www.gamcare.org.uk/free-counselling
- For useful links regarding problem gambling and suicide visit www.gamcare.org.uk/get-advice/how-can-gambling-affect-your-life/mental-health

Maytree – A Sanctuary for the Suicidal

- Maytree is a registered charity supporting people in suicidal crisis in a non-medical setting.
- The Maytree Suicide Respite Centre is the only place of its kind in the UK and fills a gap in services, between the medical support of the NHS and the helplines and drop-in centres of the

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voluntary sector.

- Maytree offers: respite for people in suicidal crisis; confidential telephone or email support; suicide prevention training; advice and training for professionals; support for community and faith groups; training in emotional first aid; consultancy support
- For more information visit http://www.maytree.org.uk/ or call **020 72637070.**

For more information on World Suicide Prevention Day visit https://www.iasp.info/wspd/

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