National Programme Focused on Women and Gambling Receives Funding Boost

Tuesday 26 January, 2021

National gambling support charity GamCare will receive a further two year's funding for its dedicated Women's Programme. The funding comes from a regulatory settlement, delivered as part of the National Strategy to Reduce Gambling Harms.

Previously supported by the Tampon Tax Fund, GamCare's ground-breaking Women's Programme is designed to gather and represent the experiences of women affected by gambling harms, to improve the accessibility of specialist support tailored to those identifying as female, and to ensure that organisations supporting women can confidently identify gambling harm and easily refer to the appropriate support services.

Women can be disproportionately affected by gambling-related harms, experiencing financial, relationship and mental health issues. Operating throughout England, Scotland and Wales, the Women's Programme is uncovering the negative impact of stigma faced by women and working to place women at the heart of the discussion.

Anna Hemmings, CEO at GamCare, says: *"Gambling is still perceived as a predominantly 'male' activity, which can result in women experiencing greater harm as they may be reluctant to seek the support they need. GamCare is working to change this perception, as gambling can and does affect women in potentially life-changing ways.*

We have also found that women's experiences of gambling are not generally understood within women's support services – we are working with a wide network of organisations to improve this, and to better understand how gambling harms intersect with the range of other issues women experience. With this insight, we can ensure specialist gambling support services can better serve their needs."

GamCare's learning from the first two years of delivering the Programme will ensure that a clear roadmap for the next two years, along with a robust evaluation framework which feeds into the National Strategy for Reducing Gambling Harms, can be implemented from April 2021. Lived experience of gambling harms will continue to be a cornerstone of the Programme.

Neil McArthur, CEO at the Gambling Commission, says: *"We are really pleased that we have been able to help this very important support initiative for women who are experiencing harm from gambling. Our evidence shows that the risks have changed due to the COVID-19 restrictions and that some young women have tried new gambling products during this period. We have been very clear with gambling operators that they must do everything they can to keep their customers safe."*

More information on GamCare's Women's Programme is available at www.gamcare.org.uk/our-work/womens-programme/

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Notes to Editors

GamCare – Working to minimise gambling-related harm

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- GamCare operates the National Gambling Helpline on Freephone 0808 8020 133 or via web chat at www.gamcare.org.uk, providing information, advice and support for anyone affected by problem gambling, funded by GambleAware. Advisers are available 24/7, every day of the year.
- GamCare provides a range of free treatment and support services to anyone affected by gambling harms across England, Scotland, Wales, as well as a moderated online Forum and daily chatrooms so that people can speak to others experiencing similar issues and seek support. Find out more at www.gamcare.org.uk
- GamCare is part of the National Gambling Treatment Service, funded by GambleAware.
- More than 30% of callers to the National Gambling Helpline are women each year (35% in 2019/20). Of this, around 80% of those women are affected others – family members and friends.
- One fifth of all clients in GamCare's treatment services are women. About a quarter of clients across the National Gambling Treatment Service funded by GambleAware are female.
- GamCare is working with a network of more than 300 organisations across Great Britain who support women. The Women's Programme is raising awareness of how gambling is linked with a range of issues affecting women and girls and helping to better identify women in need. A multi-disciplinary approach is key, as the ways women are impacted are not just gambling-specific.
- GamCare is exploring, through women's lived experience, the female perspective on gambling so we can improve on how we best support women. We are uncovering the scale of female gambling losses, and the negative impact of stigma faced by women – linked to societal expectations of women, to be "good mothers" and/or homemakers.

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