New Code for Gambling Industry to Simplify Information about Safer Gambling and Support

Friday 5 March, 2021

- *GamCare launches new Industry Code for the Display of Safer Gambling Information, to make access to tools and support easier for online gambling customers.*
- *The Code has been developed in consultation with people harmed by gambling, support services and gambling businesses.*
- *All members of the Betting and Gaming Council offering online gambling activities are expected to implement the Code within six months.*

National gambling support charity GamCare is launching a new Code of Conduct for betting businesses which will simplify how information about safer gambling tools, plus the support available for anyone struggling to control their gambling, is displayed on UK gambling websites and apps.

The new *Industry Code for the Display of Safer Gambling Information* sets out how online gambling businesses can make information about safer gambling tools and specialist gambling support services more prominent, visible, and consistent for online customers, ensuring resources and services are clear and easy to access.

According to Gambling Commission data, participation in online gambling activities has increased during the pandemic with a month-on-month increase of 6% in active accounts and 12% in bets[1]. In light of this, and the ongoing national lockdown, the Commission has urged gambling businesses to be extra vigilant as people will be spending more time at home and online, and may feel more vulnerable as a result of the length and uncertainty brought about by the pandemic period.

It is estimated that less than 5% of those affected by gambling harms across Great Britain currently access gambling support services[2]. Information on how to access these services, as well as how to access tools such as deposit limits and time outs, is not currently displayed in a consistent, accessible format across gambling apps and websites. While there has been around a 14% increase in customers implementing safer gambling tools during the pandemic, there is still more that can be done to ensure the majority of customers easily know how to access these tools, and further support if needed.

Anna Hemmings, CEO at GamCare, says: *"We know that only a small proportion of people affected by gambling harms in Great Britain come forward for support each year. By setting minimum standards for the display of safer gambling information for the online sector, we are looking to improve the consistency of information display, and reduce friction for customers so that they can readily access tools to help them manage their gambling, and to access free, specialist support whenever it might be needed."*

GamCare has consulted with Betting and Gaming Council (BGC) members to create the Code, as well as consulting GamCare service users with lived experience of gambling harms. All BGC members offering online gambling activities are expected to comply with the Code within six months.

Brigid Simmonds, Chair at the Betting and Gaming Council, says: "*As the standards body representing the regulated betting and gaming industry, the BGC is committed to promoting safer gambling. A report last week from the Gambling Commission suggested that 'problem' and 'at-risk' gambling rates fell in 2020, but one gambler experiencing harm is one too many.*

Consistency of message and display is vital, so that customers who sign up to an account with any BGC member find it's easy to view links to the National Gambling Helpline and further support, or the company's own messaging around setting deposit limits, how to self-exclude or asking their bank to block gambling payments. Prominent, visible and accessible signposting displayed in a simple way will help our customers and increase use of such tools, which is why we welcome the new GamCare Code."

For more information visit www.safergamblingstandard.org.uk/gamcare-industry-code

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Gambling :: Safer Gambling :: Gambling Harm :: Gambling Harms :: National Gambling Helpline :: Code Of Conduct :: Safer Gambling Information :: Gambling Support ::

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Notes to Editors

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2. Annual Statistics from the National Gambling Treatment Service (Great Britain) 1st April 2019 – 31st March 2020 / Healthy Survey for England 2018: Supplementary Analysis on Gambling.

GamCare – Working to minimise gambling-related harm

- 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 gambling harms, 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.
- GamCare is part of the National Gambling Treatment Service, funded by GambleAware.
- For more information on GamCare's risk reduction and outreach programmes please see https://www.gamcare.org.uk/our-work/
- GamCare provides a number of services to raise standards of customer protection across the gambling industry, including the Safer Gambling Standard. The Standard is an independent quality mark which assesses the measures gambling businesses have put in place to protect their customers from experiencing gambling related harms. More information is available at www.safergamblingstandard.org.uk
- Direct transfers to the National Gambling Helpline are also available -

The Betting and Gaming Council

The *Betting and Gaming Council* (*BGC*) is the single industry body for UK betting and gaming. For more information visit https://bettingandgamingcouncil.com/

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