
PRESS RELEASE

GAMBLEAWARE COMMISSIONED RESEARCH INDICATES YEAR-ON-YEAR INCREASE IN 'PROBLEM GAMBLERS' SEEKING TREATMENT, ADVICE OR SUPPORT

- GambleAware has today released its annual GB Treatment and Support survey, which found that more than six in ten (63%) 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+)¹ said they had used some form of treatment, advice or support in the past 12 months, compared to just over half (54%) in November 2019.
- The survey found year-on-year increases in reported usage of treatment services (from 43% to 53%) and support and advice (from 39% to 48%) among 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+).
- The report included research into treatment, advice and support delivered remotely, and found that 'gamblers' (PGSI 1+) said it was better than (44%) or about the same (38%) as accessing this in a face-to-face setting.

30th March 2021: GambleAware has today published its annual GB Treatment and Support survey, using data collected by YouGov. Commissioned by GambleAware, the report explores the usage of treatment and support services among gamblers, and those affected by another's gambling. The report follows GambleAware's first annual study of this kind, conducted in 2019.

The research found a statistically significant increase in 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+) saying they have used any form of treatment, advice or support in the past 12 months, with more than six in ten (63%) reporting they had, compared to just over half (54%) in the 2019 study.

Based on the 2020 YouGov survey, prevalence figures report 2.4% of adults to be 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+). The research used a larger sample size² than the 2019 study in order to better assess prevalence according to age, gender, UK region, socio-economic and ethnic group. An upcoming, independent methodologies review due to be published in April will further refine these results and provide greater clarity around the prevalence of problem gambling in Great Britain.

The GB Treatment and Support survey reported increased usage of treatment among 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+), rising from 43% to 53% between surveys. This increase was driven by reported use of mental health services rising significantly from 12% to 19%. There was also an increase in reported usage of advice and support, rising from 39% to 48%, driven in part by the use of self-help apps or tools, including self-exclusion technology, which 14% reported using, up from 9% in 2019.

The report included research into treatment, advice and support delivered remotely, which are of key importance during the ongoing pandemic. The results found that for 'gamblers' (PGSI 1+) who said they had accessed remote treatment, advice or support in the past 12 months, most felt it was

¹ The criteria for PGSI classification as a 'problem gambler' is a score within the range of between 8 and 27.

² In 2019, 12,161 adults in Great Britain were surveyed. In 2020, 18,879 adults in Great Britain were surveyed.

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better than (44%) or about the same (38%) as accessing this in a face-to-face setting. Common reasons for saying that accessing it remotely was better than face-to-face included:

- Discretion³ (33%)
- Convenience and personal preference for online/remote appointments (both 32%)
- Finding sessions less embarrassing or overwhelming (both 27%).

Among 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+) who have not accessed treatment, advice or support remotely (including those who have not accessed it at all), one in six (18%) felt that the quality of remote or online support would be worse for reasons such as lack of eye contact or being unable to read body language. Further, 16% of 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+) reported they did not have a private space to engage in their treatment, and a similar amount (14%) reported that sharing their devices with other people in their home would make accessing remote support difficult.

Barriers to seeking treatment, advice or support for 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+) included concern around stigma (22% of those who would not want any treatment/support) and the perception that treatment, advice or support would be inaccessible (15%). Among 'gamblers' (PGSI 1+), the most significant barrier to seeking support, treatment or advice was reported to be denial, for example not considering their gambling to be 'risky'. In 2019, 45% of gamblers (PGSI 1+) reported denial to be a barrier to treatment. This fell to 36% in the 2020 survey.

The research found that over half (59%) of 'problem gamblers' (PGSI 8+) reported wanting some form of treatment, advice, or support. This figure includes gamblers who have already accessed treatment, support or advice, meaning that there is some overlap between usage and reported demand.

The research also revealed key motivations in seeking treatment among this group (PGSI 8+). This includes those who had already accessed some form of treatment, support or advice in the last 12 months, as well as those who had not. These motivations included:

- Knowing support was available via a particular channel (29%)
- Awareness of the ease of accessing support (22%)
- Confirmation that treatment and support would be confidential (16%)

Zoë Osmond, CEO of GambleAware, said: *"It is encouraging to see a year-on-year increase in those classified as 'problem gamblers' seeking help, especially during the pandemic. These results will be used to help inform GambleAware's new commissioning strategy as we continue our work to increase provision of and access to services.*

"The significantly increased sample will allow GambleAware to better tailor existing support services according to local need and allow us to better support local authorities and health commissioners."

-ENDS-

³ 'Accessing treatment or support remotely meant that others didn't need to find out'

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About the Report

- The report presents findings of a study conducted in 2020, which explored the usage of, and need for, treatment and support services among gamblers and those affected by another's gambling.
- The report follows the first of its kind conducted in 2019, drawing comparisons between both years in order to investigate the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on gambling behaviour, as well as wider issues relating to gambling treatment and support.
- All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc.
- Total sample size was 18,879 adults.
- Fieldwork was undertaken between 19th November – 11th December 2020.
- The survey was carried out online.
- The figures have been weighted and are representative of all GB adults (aged 18+) by age interlocked with gender, ethnicity, social grade and region.
- The research was conducted by YouGov on behalf of GambleAware.
- The full report is available [here](#).

About YouGov

- YouGov is an international research data and analytics group.

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/>.
- 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 England, Scotland and Wales 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.
- GambleAware produces public health campaigns including Bet Regret. A Safer Gambling Board, 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

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broadcasting, advertising, and gambling industries. See
<https://about.gambleaware.org/prevention/safer-gambling-campaign/>.

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