

PRESS RELEASE

GambleAware promotes the voice of people who have lived experience of gambling harms

- GambleAware has appointed Expert Link to work with communities of people with lived experience of gambling harm to design and deliver an independent, inclusive, and representative GB-wide network for these communities.
- GambleAware has also signed a new grant agreement for a specialist interest group for people with lived experience of treatment for harms associated with gambling and/or gambling disorder.
- The two groups, which are both part of GambleAware's ongoing Lived Experience Programme, will each run independently but it is anticipated they will have some membership in common.

London, 11th February 2021: This month GambleAware has appointed an external organisation to co-design and deliver an inclusive and representative GB-wide network of people with lived experience of gambling harms. It has also facilitated the formation of a specialist interest group, which will operate under the name of '*Affected Lived Experience Research, Treatment and Support Group*', or 'ALERTS'. This group will be for people who have lived experienced of harms associated with gambling and who have experience of treatment within the National Gambling Treatment Service.

New Inclusive and Independent, GB-Wide Network

Following a competitive process, Expert Link was chosen to work with lived experience communities to design and deliver a new entirely independent network of people with lived experience of gambling harms that will operate across Great Britain.

Equality, diversity and inclusion will be built in to the new network, with membership from across the lived experience community, including those who tend to be more marginalised and under-represented. The membership will drive the network and determine the priorities and governance arrangements, with Expert Link facilitating the start-up process. Once formed, the group will also develop sufficient capacity and resource to meaningfully participate and influence national debate and policy making across the gambling sector.

GambleAware has provided initial funding for the new network for 18 months, however the ambition is that the network will be sustainable and completely independent, including identifying and applying for its own funding sources in the longer term.

GambleAware

Commenting on this new independent network, **Alison Clare, Research Director, GambleAware** said: *“We hope this new group will serve as a single, inclusive network that is representative of all people with lived experience of gambling harms across Great Britain. We know there are other lived experience groups already out there doing good work in this area, and this new group will fill any gaps and reach those who are harder to engage with. Our ambition is to see this independent network grow and develop so that it can help inform all aspects of the gambling debate, from policy and regulation, to research, treatment and prevention.”*

Specialist Lived Experience of Gambling Treatment Group

GambleAware has also signed a grant agreement for a new special interest lived experience group. This new group, which members have called ‘*Affected Lived Experience Research, Treatment and Support Group*’, or ‘ALERTS’, is made up solely of individuals who have experience of treatment from within the National Gambling Treatment Service (NGTS).

A key aim for this specialist group, ALERTS, will be to scrutinise existing treatment services and to provide system-wide advice and guidance from a lived experience perspective about the National Gambling Treatment Service. The group will ensure there is a representative voice for people with lived experience of gambling harms at the National Clinicians Network Forum of the National Gambling Treatment Service.

Group members have identified the following priority areas for discussion at their regular meetings:

- Ways to increase accessibility of treatment services by identifying barriers to entry;
- How to improve equity of access to treatment and ensure it is representative of all those who experience harm;
- Improving links between treatment services and other parts of the system.

GambleAware has provided initial funding for the new group for a 12-month pilot, and it will be operating as an independent advisor to GambleAware and the National Gambling Treatment Service.

Commenting on the ongoing work with this specialist group **Ruth Champion, Commissioning Manager, GambleAware** commented: *“In order for us to ensure that the treatment services we commission are what people want and need, but also effective in preventing and reducing gambling harms, we must ensure the voices of people with lived experience are heeded. The group is already contributing to existing work which builds on the peer support system which is available through the National Gambling Treatment Service. I welcome the establishment of this new group and look forward to working with them to develop further the treatment and support that people need for gambling harms.”*

-ENDS-

Contact:

GambleAware
+447523 609413

gambleaware@atlas-partners.co.uk

About the Lived Experience Programme

- There are two strands of work in GambleAware’s ongoing Lived Experience Programme:

GambleAware® • Registered in England No 4384279 • Charity No England & Wales 1093910 & Scotland SC049433

Chair: Kate Lampard CBE

Trustees • Saffron Cordery • Professor Sian Griffiths OBE • Michelle Highman •
Professor Anthony Kessel • Rachel Pearce • Paul Simpson • Professor Marcantonio Spada

Chief Executive: Marc Etches

GambleAware

- Enabling the creation of an inclusive and representative GB-wide membership network for all who have experience gambling harms.
 - Supporting the initial development of a special interest group for people with lived experience of treatment for harms associated with gambling and/or gambling disorder
- Prior to enabling the creation of a GB-wide inclusive network, GambleAware commissioned a [short evidence review](#) to identify 'what works' in developing engagement infrastructure in other sectors. GambleAware has also published a [guidance document](#) for engaging and involving people with lived experience of gambling harms in research and evaluation.
 - Expert Link were appointed to work with communities of people who have experienced gambling harms to deliver the GB-wide network after a competitive pitch process; Expert Link secured the highest score as awarded by the bid reviewers alongside a panel of community members with lived experience of gambling harms. The reviewers were impressed by Expert Link's experience in working with marginalised communities and those who have experienced social exclusions and compound stigmatisation, and their knowledge and understanding of other sectors' work in areas of community mobilisation and network formation. Having previously led the creation and delivery of peer-led lived experience networks across a range of social issues, Expert Link has extensive knowledge and experience in this area.

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 <https://www.begambleaware.org/for-professionals>.
- 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 2020, the National Gambling Treatment Service treated 9,000 people. The Helpline received 39,000 calls and on-line chats per annum. GambleAware also runs the website BeGambleAware.org which had 7.7million page views and signposts people to a range of support services.
- GambleAware produces public health campaigns including Bet Regret which is aimed at people whose experience of gambling harm does not meet the diagnostic criteria for gambling

GambleAware® • Registered in England No 4384279 • Charity No England & Wales 1093910 & Scotland SC049433

Chair: Kate Lampard CBE

Trustees • Saffron Cordery • Professor Sian Griffiths OBE • Michelle Highman •
Professor Anthony Kessel • Rachel Pearce • Paul Simpson • Professor Marcantonio Spada

Chief Executive: Marc Etches

GambleAware

disorder. 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/>.

GambleAware® • Registered in England No 4384279 • Charity No England & Wales 1093910 & Scotland SC049433

Chair: Kate Lampard CBE

Trustees • Saffron Cordery • Professor Sian Griffiths OBE • Michelle Highman •
Professor Anthony Kessel • Rachel Pearce • Paul Simpson • Professor Marcantonio Spada

Chief Executive: Marc Etches