

## PRESS RELEASE

### National Gambling Treatment Service Annual Statistics show 92% of clients who completed scheduled treatment saw an improvement in their condition

- GambleAware has today published the National Gambling Treatment Service (NGTS) Annual Statistics for 2020/21, which saw most (92%) people who completed their scheduled treatment improve their condition through a reduction to their Problem Gambling Severity Index score.
- The annual report shows that seven in ten (70%) clients were no longer defined as 'problem gamblers' by the end of treatment; an increase in clients completing treatment was also recorded, climbing to 74% up from 59% in 2016, whilst the proportion of drop-outs decreased from 35% to 20%.
- The report reveals the impact of COVID-19, in that 518 fewer people received treatment in 2020/21 than the previous year. The report also shows that the proportion of clients seeking treatment through the NGTS who participate in online gambling increased, climbing from 57% in 2015/16 to 79% in 2020/21.
- GambleAware is encouraged by the high success rates of treatment in 2020/21 despite an unprecedented year caused by the pandemic but is concerned by the low percentage of people receiving treatment for gambling harms through the Service. The charity's recently launched five-year organisational strategy has been designed to help improve access to and awareness of the NGTS, with the aim of ensuring more people receive effective treatment.

**London, 30 November 2021:** GambleAware has today published the annual statistics for the National Gambling Treatment Service (NGTS) for 2020/21. Jointly commissioned by NHS England and GambleAware, the NGTS is a network of organisations including GamCare and its partner network, Gordon Moody, and NHS treatment centres, working together to provide confidential treatment and support for anyone experiencing gambling harms.

The new report<sup>1</sup> reveals that most (92%) people who completed their scheduled treatment in 2020/21 showed improvement on their Problem Gambling Severity Index (PGSI)<sup>2</sup> score, a widely used measure of problem gambling. 8,490 people received structured treatment during the 2020/21 period, and of those who started treatment as 'problem gamblers'<sup>3</sup>, seven in ten (70%) were no longer defined as such on the PGSI scale at end of scheduled treatment<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The report does not include National Gambling Helpline figures, and only references those in structured treatment delivered by the National Gambling Treatment Service.

<sup>2</sup> The PGSI is the most widely used measure of problem gambling in Great Britain. It consists of nine items and each item is assessed on a four-point scale: never, sometimes, most of the time, almost always.

<sup>3</sup> The criteria for PGSI classification as a 'problem gambler' is a score within the range of between 8 and 27.

<sup>4</sup> 5,647 clients started treatment as 'problem gamblers' with a PGSI of 8+.

The annual report shows that the majority (93%) of referrals were self-made, with less than one per cent (0.7%) being made by GPs. Half (50%) of clients received their first appointment within three days of contacting the service, and three quarters (75%) within eight days. Treatment was shown to last on average nine weeks.

The report reveals the demonstrable impact of COVID-19 on services, with 518 fewer people accessing treatment in 2020/21 compared to 2019/20<sup>5</sup>. The report also shows that the proportion of clients seeking treatment through the NGTS, who participate in online gambling increased, climbing from 57% in 2015/16 to 79% in 2020/21. This was seemingly the leading cause of gambling harm for those in treatment.

**Zoë Osmond, CEO of GambleAware, said:** *“It is encouraging to see that during an unprecedented year, when many of the services had to move online, the National Gambling Treatment Service has been able to continue to deliver good results for those receiving treatment. The worryingly low uptake of services however underlines the very real need to continue to raise awareness of and improve pathways to the Service, so that more people know that help is available.*

*“To assist here, we are continuing to deliver impactful campaigns to help elevate awareness of the service across the country. We have recently appointed FutureGov to develop a new Outcomes Framework and Service Delivery model to help deliver improved access to, and awareness of the NGTS. We also encourage healthcare professionals and other community support figures to refer people in need to the Service, yet we recognise that the NGTS cannot tackle this problem alone and we therefore call on other statutory sectors to track results of gambling treatments to help to deliver a clearer picture of treatment in Great Britain.”*

-ENDS-

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**Notes to editors:**

**About the National Gambling Treatment Service Annual Stats 2020/21:**

- The report is available to view in full on the GambleAware website [here](#). A Welsh translation is also available [here](#).
- The report found that 8,490 individuals were treated by National Gambling Treatment Service providers (GamCare, Gordon Moody, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust and Northern Gambling Service) in England, Scotland and Wales.
- Nearly nine tenths (88%) of clients were from a White Ethnic background, with the next most represented ethnic background being Asian or Asian British (5%) and Black or Black British (4%).
- A large majority (70%) of clients were male, with female clients in the minority (30%). This has however risen from just 19% in 2015/16, yet female gambling clients were found to be less likely to complete treatment (69% compared to 73%).
- Two in five (40%) gambling clients reported having debts of over £5,000 due to their gambling, were bankrupt, or were in Individual Voluntary Agreements. Over a quarter (27%) had experienced relationship loss, and more than one in 10 (11%) experienced job loss as a result of their gambling.

**About GambleAware**

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<sup>5</sup> In 2019/20, 9,008 clients were treated through the NGTS, whereas in 2020/21 8,490 clients were treated.

- GambleAware is an independent charity (Charity No. England & Wales 1093910, Scotland SC049433) that champions a public health approach to preventing gambling harms – see [www.begambleaware.org/for-professionals/about-us](http://www.begambleaware.org/for-professionals/about-us)
- GambleAware is a commissioner of independent evidence-informed prevention and treatment services in partnership with expert organisations and agencies across Great Britain, with over £56 million of funding under active management.
- In April 2021 GambleAware published a new five-year strategy which defined the charity’s vision of a **society where people are safe from gambling harms**. This vision is based on a whole-system approach, which acknowledges the many other organisations, networks and individuals, including those who have lived experience of gambling harms, that already play a key role across the system, or have the potential to do so in the future. Alongside this, GambleAware outlined its four key strategic priorities and four commissioning objectives which will help guide the charity as it strives to achieve its vision.
- 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.
- GambleAware produces public health campaigns including ‘Bet Regret’ and is responsible for the design and delivery of the campaign based on best practice in public health education. See: [www.begambleaware.org/for-professionals/safer-gambling-campaign](http://www.begambleaware.org/for-professionals/safer-gambling-campaign).

#### About ViewIt

- ViewIt Ltd is a University of Manchester start-up company, supported by GC Business Growth Hub, specialising in data management and analysis to provide a platform for simple reporting.
- The company originates from the team that provides National Statistics production and validation for National Drug Treatment Monitoring Service outputs on behalf of Public Health England.

#### About the National Gambling Treatment Service

- The National Gambling Treatment Service is a network of organisations working together across Britain to provide confidential treatment and support, free at the point of delivery, for anyone experiencing gambling-related harms.
- 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.
- It is jointly commissioned by NHS England and GambleAware, and includes NHS, third sector and private sector providers delivering services across England, Scotland and Wales. Wherever someone makes contact throughout the network, these providers work alongside each other through referral pathways to deliver the most appropriate package of care for individuals experiencing difficulties with gambling, and for those who are impacted by someone else’s gambling.