

GambleAware Research Overview

Direction of travel

- The focus now is on building knowledge to understand the diversity and current inequalities in the experience of gambling harms; and to inform policy which increases equity and supports improved information, advice, support and treatment services to prevent and reduce gambling harms across the whole population.
- It is GambleAware's charitable objectives and organisation strategy that drive our research commissioning priorities, rather than the views or priorities of the regulator, industry, government, treatment providers or individual academics.

Independence

- GambleAware's research grants are awarded through open competition: 'Calls for proposals', including clear assessment criteria, are published for all grant awards and actively promoted online and through social media.
- Grant award decisions are made using Bid Review Panels comprising external and independent SMEs, who score all bids against the published assessment criteria.
- Grant awards include an output requirement for both plain English reports and academic publications; all reports published by GambleAware are independently peer reviewed.

Collaboration

- Multi-agency and multi-disciplinary collaboration is baked into the requirement for GambleAware's larger research programme grants. This includes collaboration between researchers, communities, and those with lived experience, as well as with academics and researchers from different disciplines.
- For example, a £250k grant for building knowledge of [women's lived experience of gambling harms](#) was awarded in August 2021 to a consortium of IFF, the University of Bristol and GamCare's Women's Programme. A £250k grant for [building knowledge of gambling harms within minority ethnic and minority religion communities](#) was awarded in Sept 2021 to a consortium of Ipsos Mori, the Centre on the Dynamics of Ethnicity (CODE) at University of Manchester, and four peer support / lived experience groups co-ordinated by ClearView.

Credibility

- GambleAware supports a move to statutory funding for research, education and treatment to prevent and reduce gambling harms.
- We recognise that some academics will not engage with GambleAware owing to the current voluntary nature of donations to the charity from industry.

- We welcome the inclusion of GambleAware funded research alongside ‘official’ datasets in the recently published PHE [Gambling-related harms Evidence Review](#).

Building research capacity, promoting diversity

- In the medium term, and pending the statutory sector and large research councils taking a lead in funding gambling harms research, GambleAware is committed to growing diversity and capacity in gambling harms research, across all academic disciplines.
- GambleAware is in the process of awarding a £4m grant over five years to help establish an [Academic Research Hub](#) within a GB university, with a view to it becoming financially independent of the charity within that time frame.
- Our PhD grant award programme (six new studentships per year over the next three years) is a key vehicle for supporting early career researchers and growing knowledge of the lived experience of gambling harms within different communities.

Supporting the wider system

- GambleAware is committed to providing two annual data sets to support policy, planning and commissioning across the whole system: the [Annual GB Treatment & Support Survey](#) and [Maps](#); and the Annual Treatment Statistics. Longer term, it is anticipated that this data will be collected by the statutory sector.
- GambleAware is committed to open data and the [Annual GB Treatment & Support Survey data](#) for 2019 and 2020 is now available via the CDRC’s online data catalogue.

Evaluation

- Evaluation plays a critical role in providing an independent, evidence-based assessment of GambleAware’s commissioned services. The Evaluation and Monitoring Team provides both evidence of need (synthesis of learnings, data and insights) and evidence of impact of the commissioned services. This evidence informs commissioning decision-making by GambleAware’s leadership team and trustees.
- Evaluation ensures that evidence-informed services are developed according to need within a robust and accountable system, and that funding is allocated efficiently and independently.
- The prevention of gambling harm is a complex and emergent area. GambleAware therefore primarily takes a theory- driven approach to evaluations. The purpose of this approach is to support our service delivery partners to learn and develop over time. For example, we are working closely with [CNWL’s Surrey Prisons Gambling Service](#), who are taking a QI approach to the development of services across 5 Surrey prisons.
- We work collaboratively with our partners in the development of the evaluation brief, ensuring that we have a collective understanding of the impacts they wish to achieve with their interventions.