

Annual Review 2015/16





Contents

Chairman's Introduction	3
CEO Foreword	4
Our Mission and Values	5
Frontline Services	6
Treatment Services	8
Training and Certification	10
Our work with young people	11
Working with the Criminal Justice system	12
Case study: Tom's story	13
Plans for 2016/17	14

Thank you

President: Lord Sharman of Redlynch OBE. **Vice President:** John Brackenbury CBE.
Chairman: Sir Ian Prosser. **Deputy Chairman:** John Hagan. **Treasurer:** Ian McRobbie OBE TD DL. **Trustees:** Susanna Fitzgerald QC, Simon Thomas, Tom Kavanagh CBE, Dominic Harrison, Professor Jon Grant, Margot Daly.

Introduction

GamCare exists to help and support those affected by problem gambling.

In 2015/16, GamCare answered more calls via the National Gambling HelpLine than ever before. Alongside our national network of Partner agencies we delivered counselling to more than 6,000 problem gamblers and affected others.

Our Education and Prevention service also continue to offer valuable services to the industry and beyond, informed by our unique understanding of problem gambling and delivered by our specialist team.

Other achievements during the year included launching our new youth and criminal justice strategies. We also extended our London counselling into two satellite offices to offer more convenient treatment options for clients, both of which have proved very well attended.

We would like to extend our thanks for the continued support we receive from the Responsible Gambling Trust (RGT). I am confident that the team we have in place at GamCare can contribute to the successful implementation of the new Responsible Gambling Strategy Board's (RGSB) three-year strategy, working with the RGT.

I very much look forward to our continued engagement in innovation from the ground-up to minimise the harm caused by problem gambling, for individuals as well as families and communities.

Sir Ian Prosser, Chairman of the Trustees



CEO Foreword

As we reflect on another year, we are convinced that the purpose for which GamCare was created is more relevant than ever before. This remains to support individuals and families who have experienced harm from gambling, and to engage with the gambling industry to promote sound protective measures for players.

For many people gambling is fun and not a harmful activity, however, for some it can become a serious problem, and that problem can grow to affect others. We believe it is important for everyone to clearly understand the risks associated with gambling, and for them to be able to access timely advice and support to prevent a problem developing. GamCare is, and has always been, best positioned to provide that advice and support.

Our Advisers and Counsellors connect with thousands of people each year who are affected by the negative impacts of their gambling behaviour; those impacts resulting in mental and psychological distress, debt, isolation, breakdown in primary relationships, and in some cases, despair leading to suicidal thoughts and feelings.

The funding we receive from the Responsible Gambling Trust, through UK gambling industry donations, means we are able to reach thousands of people each year who need our support. Many more may need our help however, and while we continue this important work, I must stress the importance that all connected with the industry should give their fair share, and thereby extend these valuable services.

GamCare has provided expert information, advice, emotional support and quality treatment to problem gamblers, their family members and affected others, for nearly 20 years. Our teams have directly supported almost half a million people as well as their communities, giving us a unique understanding of problem gambling, how to support those affected, and how to promote recovery so that they can reclaim and rebuild their lives.

We will continue innovating, collaborating and developing our network of support, and we thank those who contribute funds to support our critical services. As we approach our 20th anniversary, we encourage you to connect with us; to learn more about what we do, who we help, and where we are heading.

Dirk Hansen, CEO

Our Mission and Values

GamCare exists to support those affected by problem gambling and to minimise gambling related harm. Our mission statement is:

To support those affected by problem gambling through advice and treatment, and minimise gambling-related harm through education, prevention and communication.

During the year a new strategy for the period 2015-2018 was developed and approved. A new set of values were developed by our employees, designed to inform the way we work as an organisation with clients, callers and customers and to support our strategic objectives. These are:

Value	What this means
Client and customer focus:	Placing our service users at the heart of our organisation.
Service quality:	Delivering the best service we can for every caller, client and customer, every time.
Learning and Development:	Supporting our employees to develop their diverse skills and knowledge.
Partnership working:	Working collaboratively with a range of stakeholders to benefit our service users and colleagues.
Knowledge sharing:	Sharing our wealth of clinical and industry knowledge to cement our reputation as a trusted treatment provider.
Innovation:	Continually challenging our approach to ensure our service is robust, sustainable and the best it can be.



Frontline Services

HelpLine & NetLine

	2015/16	2014/15
Calls Answered	46,851	40,946
Success Rate	87%	85%

Forum, Chatroom & Website

	2015/16	2014/15
New Forum Posts	42,330	40,810
Chat hours offered	355	324
Unique web visitors	1,511,612	1,302,214

National Gambling HelpLine

GamCare operates the National Gambling HelpLine, the only dedicated helpline service providing free information, advice and support for anyone affected by problem gambling. We support problem gamblers as well as their friends and family members.

The HelpLine is available on Freephone **0808 8020 133** and via web chat (NetLine) at www.gamcare.org.uk from 8am - Midnight, seven days a week.

Our Advisers are trained in-house to develop specialist knowledge around problem gambling so that they can listen with empathy.

In 2015/16 we continued to receive an increasing number of calls. In total we received 46,851 calls, an increase of 13% from 2014/15. We answered 87% of calls first time.

Website, Forum and Chatroom

The GamCare website is a portal to our interactive services, as well as providing valuable information on responsible gambling and dealing with problem gambling. In 2015/16, the site received a 20% increase in visitation compared to 2014/15.

The most popular resource on our site is the GamCare Forum, providing inspirational peer support for problem gamblers and affected others at all stages. By March 2016, our Forum registered 27,605 users.

We also offer live Chatrooms for up to 12 participants every day. We are expanding our Chatroom hours, including offering two daytime Chatrooms during the week and additional evening hours every week. There were over 2,600 attendees in 2015/16.

Service quality

GamCare renewed its Helplines Partnership Accreditation in September 2015 for a further three years. This accredits our service delivery and recognises best practice. Our assessors concluded that GamCare offers 'effective, high quality support' through the National Gambling HelpLine.

Client and customer focus

As well as offering our HelpLine service to callers who are deaf or hard of hearing via Next Generation Text Service, in March 2016 we introduced Language Line telephone interpretation. Our service is now available in over 200 languages.

- » In 2015/16, **87%** of HelpLine callers and 84% of NetLine callers rated our service as 'Excellent' or 'Good'.
- » **93%** of HelpLine callers and **88%** of NetLine callers would recommend our service to their friends and family.

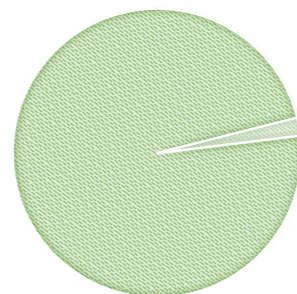
"I just wanted to let you know how grateful I am for your help a few months ago. I was in a dark place, with no one to talk to, always gambling. Talking to you really, really helped, and got me back on track... I'm doing well in university once again. What you guys do is amazing, people don't realise how important it is to have someone like you to talk to. You really did help me... thank you so much, keep up the good work!"



Treatment Services

Counselling Client Totals

	2015/16	2014/15
London	463	448
Online	100	121
Regional Partners	6,269	4,931
Total	6,832	5,500



98% of counselling clients would recommend our service

Client and customer focus

GamCare offers free face-to-face or online counselling for anyone affected by problem gambling. This service is delivered by GamCare in London and nationally through our network of 15 Partner agencies.

Our specially trained and experienced counsellors give clients the safe, confidential space needed to work through issues connected to problem gambling, helping them to find the best methods of dealing with these situations going forward.

Our counsellors work within a broad range of therapeutic approaches, meaning that GamCare can provide counselling that is tailored to the specific needs of each client.

“Having arrived at GamCare paralysed, in a deep depression and at times unable to get out of bed easily, life has [now] transformed... for the last few months, gambling never crossed my mind. My wellbeing is much better, I am being more productive with my time and there is much more hope on the horizon. Thank you GamCare for helping me take the first few steps to recovery.”

Service quality

On average, GamCare and our Partners are able to offer a counselling appointment within seven days of referral. Depending on location, we offer daytime and evening appointments for regular sessions.

- » The average overall client satisfaction score for our counselling service was 4.9/5.
- » When clients were asked if they felt that GamCare counselling had made a positive change in their gambling situation, the average score was 4.7/5.

“I want to thank GamCare, and to encourage anyone else struggling to control their gambling to seek help too – it can really make a difference.”

Innovation

Within our London counselling service this year, we opened two satellite offices and increased our evening appointments. We also began the expansion of our online counselling service to offer more choice and convenience for clients, fitting in around work and other commitments. This is proving very popular with clients.

We also introduced a dedicated therapy group for affected others, and continued development of our cutting-edge face-to-face and online psycho-educational programmes.

Partnership Working

We value our Partner agencies across Great Britain and appreciate their unique contribution to delivering local services.

We are increasingly focussed on utilising expertise across the network to develop our services and ensure consistency in our offer to clients. Representatives from our Partner agencies meet once a month to share best practice and to work together to develop new services.



Training and Certification

Certification

GamCare works directly with licensed land-based and online gambling operators to provide Certification. We support implementation of robust player protection and social responsibility standards across the industry, helping to minimise gambling-related harm.

We accredit companies who demonstrate achievement of the comprehensive standards set out in our newly revised Codes of Practice for player protection and social responsibility.

23 UK and international operators achieved Certification during 2015/16.



Social Responsibility and Interaction Training

Our unique training and development solutions are designed to educate frontline service and strategic management teams within the gambling industry, improving customer interaction and raising awareness of social responsibility and responsible gambling policy and practice. More than 350 UK and international industry professionals attended 24 training sessions during 2015/16, and a further 15 license agreements were made for our bespoke ExTra eLearning.

Knowledge sharing

We have participated in consultations from the UK Gambling Commission on strengthening the Social Responsibility Code within the Licensing Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP). We were also a part of the consultation to prepare the new Responsible Gambling Strategy 2016-19, published by the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board (RGSB).

We have recently taken part in consultations on developing multi-operator self-exclusion schemes across all industry sectors, and are an integral part of the Responsible Gambling Trust sponsored National Clinicians Network Forum.

Our work with young people

GamCare has now concluded a pioneering three-year youth education and treatment pilot with our Partner agency ARA in Bristol. We have evaluated this project with a view to expanding this work across the country.

- » Screening, information and intervention tools were designed, tested and disseminated among professionals and young people.
- » 99 frontline professionals working with young people were trained to work with those at risk of gambling-related harm and problem gambling. These professionals then reached 1,089 young people.
- » Training was designed and delivered to enable youth workers and teachers to recognise problems, offer advice and signpost to help. Professionals attending reported greater confidence (an average increase from 3 to 7/10) in providing gambling awareness and education.
- » Workshops and one-to-one screenings and interventions were delivered to 2,632 young people (mostly aged 14-19) in non-school settings.

Alongside this work, we have launched a comprehensive review of the BigDeal website – our dedicated online resource for young people, visited by more than 2,000 people every month - to ensure it continues to meet the needs of its target audience.

This will involve a wide-scale survey for 12-18 year olds, and will be followed up with focus groups and co-creation sessions designed to draw out the needs of this age group around problem gambling advice and support. The outcomes of these focus groups will be used to scope a rebuild and relaunch of BigDeal.

We have also acknowledged the need to provide more information for parents and will incorporate this content into our new website, alongside more dynamic and interactive content for young people.



Working with the Criminal Justice system

After a year-long pilot at HMP Highpoint, which saw GamCare partner agency Breakeven deliver counselling to over 90 prisoners, we have developed a strategy to expand our screening and treatment services across the UK criminal justice system.

GamCare has developed new products designed to work with the police, prisons and the probation service to raise employee awareness of problem gambling, upskilling them to ensure that those affected are identified and signposted to the services they need.

GamCare Partner agency Beacon Counselling Trust has now delivered training to key medical staff in three custody suites across Cheshire on how to identify potential problems with gambling and refer into treatment in the local area.

[Pictured: Neil Platt, Director at Beacon, with chief medical staff, Deputy Chief Superintendent Jonathan Betts, Chief Inspector Christopher Warren and Detective Sergeant Brian Faint at the launch of this pilot.]



"I've been a thief all my life, to feed addictions like drugs, gambling and drinking. I've been in and out of prison and I hate it, I'm tired of it all. At first, I wondered what I was talking [to you] for, but I'm about to be released and I realise I have a different perspective now... I don't want to come back here or anywhere else. I just want some peace, a little job, and a future. Most importantly, I can see that future now, for the first time in many years..."

[Client, HMP Highpoint, 2015]

Case Study: Tom's story

Tom, 28 from York, attended GamCare counselling and has been gamble-free since June 2015.

Tom says: "I found GamCare through an internet search and at first I contacted them via the NetLine. When I'd just had a big loss for the second time, I started to realise I needed help to stop gambling. I wanted to stop for good, and I felt counselling would be the kind of support I needed."

Tom feels that the chance to explore his feelings and understand what triggered him to gamble was really beneficial.

He says: "What worked well for me was learning how I could refocus my energy on other things – like exercise or watching movies – that let me relax and let the urges to gamble pass."

Tom also relied on his family during his therapy, and feels that self-exclusion from gambling sites was a helpful tool to aid his recovery. Setting daily and weekly goals, small steps followed by rewards, was a good way for him to motivate change and feel more comfortable without resorting to gambling.

"The support I received from GamCare was really important – counselling was a massive help. I also participate in the GamCare Forum, and sharing my experience with other members was a big help at the beginning of my journey. Just having others in similar situations to talk to and share advice and encouragement is something I would really recommend."

Tom wants to encourage others to seek help if they feel that gambling is becoming a problem. He says: "Letting go of [problem gambling] is hard work, and the urges take a long time to subside – you may still get them sporadically. It takes a lot of willpower and determination, but find other hobbies and realise what else you have in your life!"



Future Plans

Building the organisation and our strategy

The following strategic objectives were reviewed and approved by Trustees in 2015/16:

- » To provide high quality, effective and impartial advice and support for problem gamblers and affected others, serving the whole of Great Britain
- » To provide high quality, effective, versatile and responsive treatment for problem gamblers and affected others in Great Britain
- » To help and support operators and regulators in the development and implementation of effective responsible gambling policies, measures and practices, including certification, training and consultancy
- » To lead in the development of best practice in research, education, communication and become an internationally recognised Centre of Clinical Excellence
- » To provide advice, support, education and treatment to young people and other vulnerable groups
- » To run GamCare efficiently and effectively

Strategic focus

We also identified the following strategic focus for the period 2015-18:

- » Engaging stakeholders with a refreshed marketing and communications function
- » Developing innovative specialist programmes for customers outside of our core services, (e.g. prisoners, young people, other professional groups, LAs)
- » Developing a fundraising programme in support of our specialist projects
- » Developing a Centre of Clinical Excellence
- » Further developing the evidence base for our work

In 2016/17 we will:

- » Diversify our online offer through the GamCare Forum and Chatrooms
- » Expand our online counselling service to offer weekend appointments
- » Achieve organisational BACP accreditation
- » Launch new evening therapy groups in London
- » Develop a fundraising programme in support of our project work with young people and the criminal justice system, including the expansion of our counselling provision in prisons
- » Embedding evaluation into our project work with support from external agencies
- » Redevelop and relaunch the BigDeal website and social media platforms
- » Continue developing strategic relationships with nationwide support agencies to refer to GamCare services
- » Target promotional activity and awareness raising at financial services and public health bodies



Helpline

0808 8020 133

NetLine, Forum and Chatroom

www.gamcare.org.uk

GamCare

2nd Floor, 7-11 St John's Hill
London, SW11 1TR

T: 020 7801 7000

E: info@gamcare.org.uk

A Charitable Company Registered in England No.3297914 | Charity No. 1060005

