

GamCare *matters*

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Issue 1 • Summer 2004

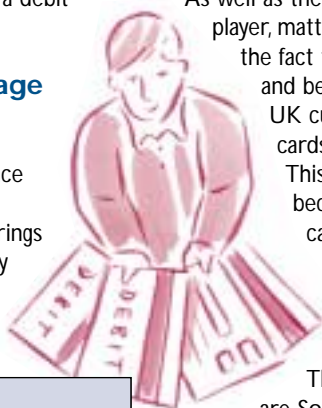
Out of Site, Out of Mind Debit Cards and Underage Gambling on the Internet



The popularity of Internet gambling and betting continues to grow in the UK with new sites and gambling opportunities, seemingly appearing on a weekly basis, and sites attracting new customers daily. Probably the greatest advantage of Internet gambling is the convenience, as a new customer can set up an account and play in a matter of minutes and from the comfort of their own home. All you need is a computer, Internet access and a debit or credit card.

Concerns with underage gambling

However, whilst the convenience of Internet gambling has been central to its success, it also brings with it new concerns especially with regard to underage play. Blocking underage play



within the terrestrial gambling industry is very easy in practice as all it requires is visual identification, regarding how old an individual looks and a request for ID from any suspected minor. Verifying age on the Internet is much harder as straight away you lose the ability of visual identification.

Debit cards

As well as the inability to visual verify a player, matters are made far worse by the fact that most Internet gambling and betting sites aiming to attract UK customers accept UK debit cards as well as credit cards. This becomes a concern because in the UK some debit cards are issued by major high street banks to children as young as 12 years old.

The highest risk debit cards are Solo and Visa Electron as they can be issued to children under 16. Switch, which is also a popular debit card, is often issued to people between 16 and 18 years old. Recent figures from APACS (the Association for Payment Clearing Services) have also highlighted the scale of this problem by estimating that around 700,000 16 and 17 year olds own a debit card. By including holders of a debit card between 12 and 15 this figure is likely to be closer to 1 million under 18's with a debit card.

This is an issue that any operator of an Internet gambling site should be aware of and addressing. At the present though GamCare has been very concerned with whether most operators are taking adequate measures to verify age or indeed taking any measures at all. We have already



been made aware of several cases where under 18's have been able to register and gamble on an Internet site using their own debit card without having to verify their age in any way, and worst still, have been so amazed at how easy it was that they have even told their friends who did the same.

The problem of under age access is also accelerated by the fact that these days children are very computer literate (often more than their parents) and gambling advertisements continue to proliferate on the Internet some, quite aggressively, with promises of large jackpots and free bets.

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Phil Horne, Director of Gaming - Coral

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Views expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of GamCare

GamCare is the national centre for information, advice and practical help in relation to the social impact of gambling in the U.K. We strive to develop strategies that will:

- improve the understanding of the social impact of gambling;
- promote a responsible approach to gambling;
- address the needs of those adversely affected by a gambling dependency



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Time for action

It is clear that the current situation needs to be drastically improved to assure the public, Government and regulators that Internet sites can adequately protect against underage play. There shouldn't be any excuses as ID and age verification systems already exist and are being used effectively by Internet sites regulated in Alderney as well as a few sites within the UK including the National Lottery. Whilst the situation will improve with the new Gambling Bill, which is due in a couple of years, operators should really be taking action now to stop children gambling on their sites, as the current situation is just not good enough.

Michael Smeaton,
Remote Gaming Specialist, GamCare
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Editorial

I hope you like the new format and title for GamCare Matters! We're hoping to make it more reader friendly and I'd love your contributions of news and views, send them to my email address below.

The ever-changing face of GamCare, continues almost on a day to day basis, requests for gaming industry training in Social Responsibility, to be conducted at our offices in London Bridge, have really taken off this year.

Industry training has been a major force within GamCare since the beginning of 2004, and the importance of this has shown in callers to our Helpline who found our phone number in various gaming establishments. Of particular interest was the increase in the amount of callers requesting self-exclusion.

Even those companies that haven't, as yet, received training in social responsibility have reacted favourably to GamCare's approach to organise individual self exclusion.

We are also experiencing the unusual request of multi self-exclusion, that is a gambler wishing to be excluded from every betting office of a particular group, in one town or city. We have managed to put together the problem gambler and the gaming company concerned dealing directly together. Read the Corals story inside.

Many senior people have passed through our door this year, Peter Dean, accompanied by Members of the Gaming Board, Gary Clifford, Gambling Problem Helpline New Zealand, David Beeton and Sir David Durie, R.I.G.T., and many others, who all came on fact finding tours of GamCare.

Our Conference is upon us featuring some of the most important decision makers in UK gaming. Check our web site for details: www.gamcare.org.uk

Prof. Peter Collins our new Chief Executive, who joined us in January, has settled into the job of overseeing GamCare and all its happenings. Our Helpline is going from force to force with more calls being answered than ever before, all statistics gathered from calls to the Helpline can be found in our latest Care Report, copies available from GamCare.

Finally, I would like to add my congratulations on the marriage of Liz & John, Helpline and face-to-face counsellors, who, dare I say it, were bought together by GamCare and their shared interest in problem gambling! May they have a long and happy life together!

Hope to see you at our conference.

Teresa Tunstall, Editor
teresa@gamcare.org.uk



Gaming Board's away day with GamCare

Members of the Gaming Board spent the morning with GamCare and its Trustees.

Peter Dean, Chairman, listened along with other members of the Gaming Board to individual GamCare staff explaining exactly how each of their cogs turn within a normal working day. Self exclusion requests to the Helpline, Internet Remote gambling and face to face counselling were just a few of the subjects covered in a morning.

After a light lunch with GamCare the Gaming Board went on their way with a more informed vision of the workings of GamCare and a better understanding of our hopes and achievements.

Launch of new Care Report 2003

After a few minor hitches the annual GamCare Report is launched brimming with invaluable information and the only statistics available on problem gambling in the UK, this Report is not to be missed.

Collated from calls to our Helpline, gathering information from these calls can often be very difficult, because of emotional content.

A variety of statistics are collected. Age, gender, gambling activity, how they found our number, and the number of calls we received are just a few of all the valuable information we gather.

Unfortunately, being such a hidden addiction, there is much remorse

attached to divulging the sums of money they've lost and many are reluctant to release such information. Never the less, from those who would tell us, figures show the average debt had risen from £19,000 the previous year to £20,000.

Copies of the new Care Report can be obtained from GamCare or from September on our website: www.gamcare.org.uk



GamCare website continues to grow

Since the launch of the new GamCare website back in November 2003, we have been delighted to see the amount of visitors to the site triple in volume from just under 5,000 visits in November to nearly 15,000 in May. As well as attracting more visitors the new site has greater functionality including online ordering of publications, a developing newsletter subscription and more new updates.

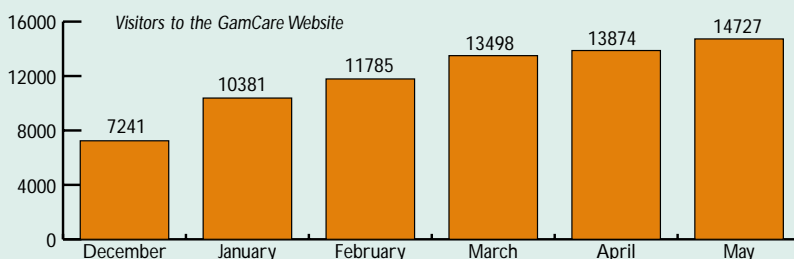
"The new site has certainly proved successful so far and we are planning to implement some new functionality in the near future to make the site even more interactive" stated Michael

Smeaton, who has been developing the website along with Andrew Poole.

Coming soon within the site will be monthly online polls that will be focusing on current gambling matters, feedback forms to allow visitors to voice their opinions and a new monthly newsletter linked with a simple subscription button.

GamCare will also be including an entry questionnaire to obtain valuable views and information from its visitors so it can develop and improve the site to meet its visitors needs.

To subscribe to the GamCare website and keep up to date with news and events visit www.gamcare.org.uk



GIGSE - TORONTO, May 2004

Over 900 people attended The Global Interactive Gaming Show & Exhibition in Toronto in mid May. It was a genuine global gathering where everything from advertising to the latest legislation was debated. It was very encouraging to hear from several speakers that Social Responsibility is right up there at the top of their agendas

The River City Group under the direction of Sue Schneider organised a charity event to conclude the Show when donations by the Remote gambling industry were made to their nominated charity GamCare. Various senior executives from the industry donned Sumo wrestling gear to compete to help contributions. Sue herself fought valiantly on the floor and with just a little help from the referee was the final victor!

Donations of US\$30,000 have been pledged. A truly magnificent gesture from some marvellous companies.



Partnership in Action

GamCare now has 4 videos that will add tremendous value to GamCare's work.

One video will be used in training for our Helpline and another for Face to Face counselling in London and with our Partners around UK.

These training tools include up to date issues about the complexities around gambling dependency and will be invaluable as our contact and counselling network increases and new people contribute to GamCare's services to the public.

A third video acts as a scene setter for the industry and includes experienced people talking about the attractions and issues of gambling. Our thanks to so many people in the industry for

giving up their time and facilities to help make such a useful and impactful communication.

The last video will be one that covers Education and will be used in a proactive way with the public. Young people, schools, youth associations and other support charities will find this video both helpful and entertaining. Viewers will then be able to make informed decisions about gambling opportunities. This video is still being produced and is planned to be available in September 2004. All GamCare videos are courtesy of Sky's generosity and expertise.

Images taken from the videos used for our Helpline and face to Face training



GamCare training within the Gaming Industry

Social Responsibility has been on the lips of gaming regulators continually with every new draft bill. Since the beginning of the year, prompted by the possibility of new regulation, GamCare has been inundated with requests for training in Social Responsibility, from the industry.

Trail blazing the way was Ladbrokes, quickly followed by Stanleybet, Corals, Done, Tote, William Hill and Paddy Power from the Licensed Betting Office sector.

In January, BACTA, the amusement sector, requested that all their members fulfil Social Responsibility training by the end of 2004. Training continues all over the country until the end of the year.



The trail blazers in the bingo sector were Carlton Clubs, Scotland. Pictured Brian King and Elaine Montgomery from Carlton Clubs, receiving certification from Peter Cox, Managing Director GamCare. Carlton completed the company training of all their staff in February 2004.

Gala, who span both the bingo and casino sector, started training in June.

Hon. Treasurer of GamCare steps down



George LI. Law, has decided to step down from his role as Trustee & Hon. Treasurer of GamCare

Retired formerly Managing Director of a leading merchant bank, George joined GamCare in its infancy and has been instrumental in financially guiding the charity to a position of stability.

GamCare would like to take this opportunity to thank George for the enormous amount of time and his devotion to the charity over the years and I speak for all at GamCare when I say he will be sadly missed.

Self Exclusion

Self-exclusion is a powerful tool for the gambler, enabling them to take control of their gambling.

So when a caller to the Helpline requested self-exclusion from the betting offices of three largest betting groups in a busy seaside town, I was initially daunted at the prospect. This would mean exclusion from between 30-40 betting shops, from three separate companies.

I telephoned my contacts within each betting group explained the situation, and with the permission of the gambler, passed on his contact details so each could work directly with him.

The feedback from the betting companies after speaking with the gambler was incredibly encouraging.

The gambler supplied 26 photos for his self-exclusion forms for one betting group, all three companies felt he was truly committed to seeing this through. They also felt very touched by the gambler's honesty and informed me they wished they'd been able to offer more help with his issues.

**Joint initiative:
BACTA and GamCare**

The joint initiative between BACTA and GamCare to promote social responsibility within the coin-operated amusement business has been operating now for some six years. It has been a pleasure working on behalf of the BACTA membership, firstly with Paul Bellringer, latterly with Peter Cox and Teresa Tunstall, and I am particularly pleased that our sector of the gambling industry was the pioneer in undertaking a Social Responsibility Training program.

The non-judgemental approach adopted by GamCare in its dealings with both operator and problem gambler has been an influential factor in our members' willing and active participation, and BACTA anticipates that every site-operating company will have successfully completed training and be certificated by the end of 2004.

The BACTA membership has always striven to act positively and responsibly when approached by those who are experiencing difficulties with their gaming, and there are many instances where such attitude has proved beneficial to the vulnerable. The advantage of a structured training program is that operators will now be able to demonstrate a duty of care as part of a 'fit and proper' assessment.

As Head of Compliance, I have offered full commitment to the work that GamCare is involved in, and it is gratifying to be able to assist this bona fide care agency when called upon to do so.

Philip Silver
Head of Compliance
BACTA

2nd June 2004



Directing Matters

The Government continues to press on with the Gambling Bill and encouragingly takes into account 121 recommendations put to them by the Joint Scrutiny Committee.

GamCare's Care Services Report for 2003 has been published and shows that the demand for GamCare services is growing.

A number of TV programmes in recent months have depicted gambling problems with their major characters showing that it makes compelling viewing. Equally it also demonstrates what a devastating thing gambling dependency can be not only for the gambler but also for close friends and relatives.



More people will have access to gambling opportunities in the future so will there be more people seeking information, advice and support from GamCare? I would say this is very likely Bill or no Bill. Whatever the situation GamCare will be ready to help in any way we can.

Peter Cox
Managing Director

.....News Flash!.....

Our new communiqué ~ changes for the better

Welcome to the first issue of our brand new newsletter, GamCare Matters. This replaces GamCare News with a completely new layout and image.

Throughout the years, since the foundation of GamCare, there has been little change in our GamCare News, but with new laws, global gaming

companies coming to our shores, the term social responsibility on everyone's lips and many other issues blowing in the wind of change, we felt now was the time to take a long hard look at ourselves!

To reflect these changes within the gaming world, GamCare wants to be seen moving forward, yet not forgetting where we came from and what we will always strive to achieve. Our mission is and has always been to support the problem gambler.

The changing face of the GamCare newsletter



Winter 1998



Summer 2000



Youth Gambling: A Hidden Addiction

A View from North America

Author:

Jeffrey L. Derevensky, Ph.D



Adolescence as a developmental period is typically marked by significant changes. It is a period of introspection, heightened sexuality, experimentation, and limit testing. Adolescence has also been traditionally associated with engaging in a number of potentially risky behaviours (e.g., excessive and binge drinking, cigarette smoking, drug use, and unprotected sexual behaviour). While gambling is often thought to be an adult activity, there is a growing body of research suggesting that youth not only actively engage in gambling (wagering money to win money), but that an identifiable proportion of youth are experiencing serious gambling related problems.

Gambling behaviour, amongst youth or adults, can best be understood and measured along a continuum of risk, ranging from non-gambling or healthy/social gambling on one end of the continuum to unhealthy or

problem/pathological gambling on the other. While most youth and adults gamble in a responsible manner, some individuals are unable to control their level of playing, are unable to stop in spite of repeated efforts, and fail to set and maintain reasonable spending limits. A number of negative personal, familial, social, economic, and health consequences have been associated with excessive gambling.

Current prevalence rates in the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom suggest that approximately 80% of underage youth report having gambled during the past year, with 4-6% experiencing severe problems and 10-15% at risk for the development of a gambling problem. While legally prohibited from engaging in government sponsored gambling in most jurisdictions the National Research Council (1999) in the United States concluded that adolescents represent a high-risk group for gambling problems and that the pathological gambling rates among adolescents could be as much as three times that reported by adults. Similar to adults, adolescents report gambling for enjoyment, excitement and to make money. Equally distressing is that adolescents with significant gambling-related problems report beginning gambling quite early (approximately 10 years of age), often with parents, siblings and friends.

While gambling and pathological gambling during adolescence is more common amongst males, the problems have gone relatively unnoticed. Gambling is often referred to as the hidden

addiction since unlike alcohol or drug use there are no visible signs. Yet, the negative short and long term consequences can be equally devastating.

Problem and pathological gambling amongst youth has been shown to result in increased delinquency and criminal behaviour, disrupted familial and peer relationships, poor physical health, increased depression and anxiety, and decreased academic performance and truancy. Adolescents with gambling problems are also more likely to be at heightened risk for suicide ideation and suicide attempts, are prone to engaging in multiple co-occurring addictive behaviours (smoking, drinking, drug use/abuse), and exhibit more severe mental health problems.

Research has suggested that more youth are not only gambling than engaging in other potentially addictive behaviours, but they also exhibit more gambling problems than alcohol and drug addictions. While approximately 4.2% of 12-17 year olds are reported to have an alcohol abuse problem and 2.3% have an illicit drug abuse problem (National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, 2001), both are lower than the 4-6% of youth with severe gambling problems.

The preferred type of gambling activity popular among young regular gamblers is dependent upon their developmental level, the available gambling opportunities and their accessibility, legal restrictions, and cultural factors. In general young males are prone to gambling on cards, sports pools, sporting events and wagering on games of skill while young females are



Update on GamCare Youth Issues

Andrew Poole,
Education Officer Young People

prone to gambling on cards, lottery tickets, and bingo, with the lottery being a preferred activity for most adolescents in spite of legal prohibitions. More recently, technologically sophisticated forms of gaming machines, interactive CD-ROM lotteries, telephone wagering, and gambling on the Internet have peaked their interest.

Most adolescents remain unaware that gambling can result in serious problems. While there is a long history of school related education prevention programs and media campaigns warning children and adolescents of the dangers associated with smoking, alcohol and drug use, and sexually transmitted diseases, few gambling prevention programs exist.

The International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviours at The McGill University is actively involved in research, training, prevention, treatment and consultations with members of the industry, governments and regulators in helping develop responsible social policies. It is currently working on developing science-based prevention and treatment programs for youth. The Centre has an International advisory board has provided research, training and clinical consultations in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and is working closely with colleagues in the Pan American Health Organization, and Central and South America.

For more information contact our Web site at www.youthgambling.com or 00-1-514-398-1391



The recently published 2003 Care Services Report shows that a third of all first time calls still come from young people, and yet more from concerned parents, guardians, carers and youth/education professionals. Now is the time to get serious about educating youth. The recurring theme at the moment (and one I am pleased to say that the industry seems to be sharing) is that of protecting children. Great. But, that doesn't simply mean monitoring underage attendance in amusement arcades, or managing the huge number of enticements to gamble young people are exposed to every time they surf the Web or check some email. We need to get serious about educating young people, empowering them to make responsible decisions regarding their involvement in adult leisure activities. Drugs, alcohol, STDs and teen pregnancy, all things children are formally taught about, but still are prevalent within society. What hope if gambling addiction remains 'hidden' and young people uninformed?

So what do we do? Right now we eagerly await the new academic year when we can begin to roll out our new teacher pack and video, (very exciting, and made possible by Sky, with particular thanks to Ursula McCulloch and team for their fantastic efforts). And we continue to make headway and drive forward many other projects aimed at helping young

people access up-to-date, relevant information about how to stay safe. Particularly exciting has been the recent interest from football clubs, who wish to work with GamCare to develop workshops for players within their youth academies. GamCare hope to pilot a programme with Ipswich Town Football Club at the start of the new season.

And finally...

In partnership with Welsh youth organisation Canllaw we held a successful gambling themed week, with about 40 youth groups and schools in the south of Wales getting involved. The highlight of the week was when I took the opportunity to be 'Star Guest' (my ego has calmed down now) during a live web chat with about 20 young people discussing the issues surrounding gambling and addiction. I was pleased to see so many informed and valid opinions on key issues like new legislation, machine payouts and age regulation. Perhaps we would all do well to listen to young voices a little more...

For further information regarding GamCare youth education projects please contact Andrew Poole on 020 7378 5230 or email andrew@gamcare.org.uk



Taking Flight

Author:

Liz Taylor, GamCare Counsellor

Often in my practice I have heard male clients recovering from a gambling problem present since a young age, speaking of how an essential part of their recovery is in the beginning to take responsibility. "But nobody ever showed me how", is a familiar phrase that often follows this insight.

We live in confusing times in Western culture. Focusing on young males, often absent fathers, or fathers too exhausted from the demands of modern life means that often there is no initiation into manhood – nobody 'shows them how'. The result is often confusion over how to live a balanced life as an adult male, how to take responsibility.

As a child, if we are fortunate, most of us experience feelings of grandiosity, feeling that we are special, immortal {similar to the feelings of first love, perhaps.} but if we are unfortunate, this experience is missing. When these feelings are experienced, at their greatest potency, they have the affect of giving us 'wings' – we fly above the more difficult parts of life, we avoid the mundane. Jungian psychology describes this well as the 'Peuer Aeternus' archetype.

What if, at some point as a young adult, facing and feeling unprepared for greater responsibility, an experience is encountered that re-creates, or gives a first experience of, that feeling of transcendence – gives us back our wings? For example, the first time of playing a fruit machine, or placing a bet. The hypnotic feeling, from the flashing lights, and focus given to the machine. The adrenalin from the buzz of the first

win. These can enable us to fly above the pressure to make adult commitments. This can then operate like a basic conditioning process – if we get a positive affect from a cause - we want more of it, more of this feeling of transcendence.

There is a price to pay for these wings. The flight away from responsibility keeps the ascender in a stasis – nothing changes, nothing grows in terms of his personal development. He becomes de-skilled, in terms of strategies for coping with life. Whilst using gambling to help him to fly, the problems he is avoiding worsen eg. relationships suffer, as even when physically with another, he is mentally flying away. A huge cost of using gambling for this flight is, of course, the financial one.

The combination of these factors, is a self-fulfilling prophecy. The gambler, believing that external problems are beyond his internal coping resources has, in his avoidance of them, deprived himself of developing the skills to cope with problems. The world then seems too terrifying to return to. He feels like he has no option other than to keep flying, often until, like the mythical Icarus, his wings are burned, not by the sun, but by a fire of financial ruin, failed relationships and a feeling of life imploding.

Accepting quality counselling might be the first opportunity, not only to learn strategies to become and remain gambling free, but also to acquire, or re-learn life-skills that years of avoidance have depleted.



▷▷ A recent survey in Vermont, USA, found that 53 percent of students in junior and senior high school had participated in some form of gambling within the past year.

▷▷ Britain is the only western nation that allows children to gamble.

▷▷ 89.5% of Helpline callers under the age of 18 reported fruit machines as their gambling activity.

▷▷ The perception of a pathological gambler is a classic stereotypical picture, one that teenagers feel bears no resemblance whatsoever to their own gambling activities.

The Next Jimmy White?

Author:
David

They say that you never see a poor bookmaker, well; I have the dubious honour of being the exception! I spent five years on the 'right' side of the betting shop counter taking the punter's money. The trouble was I couldn't wait to gamble my own money and any other cash I could get my hands on. I left the industry two years ago, due to the stress or working 12 hour shifts knowing that my wages were merely paying off gambling debts.

Gambling had always fascinated me. I used to love playing the fruit machines as a kid when my dad gave me a few pound coins to play with (my only ever 'no lose' gamble).

I didn't know what I was doing, but who cared? It was a buzz. By the time that I was 16 years of age I was introduced to the murky world of the local snooker hall. It was the £200 Jackpot fruit machines there that grabbed my attention. Within a fortnight of playing the machines I hit the jackpot. I won £168. I felt ecstatic, I was hooked.

My 'A' level studies took a back seat as I missed lessons to go to the snooker hall – all my cash going into the machines. I remember nearly running a woman down after I went through a red light. I was speeding back from the cash point in my haste to put more money in the fruit machine, to chase my losses. I spent that much time in the snooker hall that my mum thought that I was going to be the new Jimmy White!

I managed to jumble my way through my 'A' levels and ended up at University. Rather than follow the usual student rituals, I was making my way to the local dog track three nights a week. Inside of two months I had lost my student grant,

loan and savings. I was betting £20 a race when students were meant to live on £40 a week. But, I was flash and loved to bet big – win or lose. The bookmakers at the track must have loved me; they would have shed a collective tear the day I left university.

I dropped out of university halfway through my second year. I'd been to one lecture in five months. I'd learnt nothing about the economist John Maynard Keynes, but I had plenty of ideas about the 3.07 race at Milton Keynes! So, I moved back home and carried on in the same vein for six months.

I virtually lived in my local bookies, so it was a logical progression when I took a job as a cashier there. Suddenly, I was being paid to be in the place I'd been in all day anyway. I couldn't believe my luck. For a few months I stayed gambling free, simply happy to watch the races from behind the counter. Then I started getting my friends to put bets on for me and eventually I'd just write them out myself. I'd lose my month's wages in the shop the day I got paid.

Every month I promised myself that the next month would be different but it never was. Even after gaining promotion to shop manager I was still the same. That was the pattern for three years before I left to go travelling to Australasia for a year. I knew that I would be going to Australasia so somehow I managed to put money aside for my trip. I received some help from my family as well. Even over there I managed to gamble the £2,000 I had for my trip in four days in a casino. It meant that I was picking fruit



for a year to scrape by, even sleeping rough and ending up in court for non-payment of rent.

On my return from travelling I went to work for another bookmaker in the City of London. I had hoped that I had learnt my lesson, but I was wrong. Within six months I had lost £10,000 all owed on credit cards and loans. After a year I simply resigned my post as I was fed up working 12 hours shifts just to pay my debts. The day before I quite I lost £1,000 in an afternoon. For the next year I was back on the wrong side of the counter gambling whatever cash I could get my hands on.

Obviously, I had ignored all of my debts and had the bailiffs at my door all of the time. I couldn't pay them. I could see no solution, so I took an overdose to end it all. My mum found me and I was rushed to hospital. I spent a fortnight in a psychiatric unit recovering. I was referred to GA but I telephoned GamCare instead. I was put in touch with Gordon House, a residential treatment centre for compulsive gamblers.

I have been living there now for six months out of a nine month duration. Apart from a few weeks in October, I have remained gambling free and I feel great. I cannot wait to face the future, knowing that if I can conquer this, my life will be better and the lives of those around me who I have hurt will be better too.

I feel liberated, but I know I will be fighting this for the rest of my life. But, it is a battle that I know I am going to win.

Friends of GamCare

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Evercare from Gordon House Association

Gordon House Association is thrilled to be able to announce that, thanks to new funding from RIGT, we are now able to provide 'Evercare', rather than just residential treatment and support, to addicted gamblers.

"What is Evercare?" I hear you ask.

'Evercare' is the word Faith Freestone, our recently appointed Managing Director, has borrowed from the NHS, to describe our integrated service that is not just 'residential care' and/or 'after care' but the membership of a support and advice network that will be there for the rest of an addict's life. Our residential treatment programme is there to help start them on the road to recovery whilst our new outreach

service, entirely funded by RIGT, will be there to help them stay on that road after they have completed the residential programme.

Our new outreach service is built around 'Distance Therapy' and face to face support. Face to face support will be provided by three ex residents who have gone on to become trained outreach staff members, whilst 'Distance Therapy' will allow ex residents to seek support via our patented secure online counselling service, email, text, phone or by mail, 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Also, just as in our residential settings, the support and advice from fellow addicts is one of the main arteries of support, we have now formed the Gordon Moody Network wherein current and ex residents will be able to stay in contact, support, advise and socialise with each other, thus continuing

that important artery of support that started when they were a resident in one of our projects.

Gordon House Association will continue to concentrate on working only with the more severely addicted gambler and rely on GamCare, GA and others to continue to develop essential educational and other services for those who have a lesser problem with their gambling or are affected by someone else's gambling.

'Evercare' is not the only new word introduced into the daily 'speak' of Gordon House, we also now have the 'Munchkins' and 'Yellow Brick Road' philosophy - but more of that in another edition of GamCare Matters!

Kevin Farrell Roberts,
KFR@gordonhouse.org.uk

Are you up to the job?

After meeting up with Teresa at this years ATEI in London the conversation soon turned to the next edition of the GamCare news, and as we had just been having an interesting discussion about the "gambler" I thought I would put fingers to keypad!

To respond to the question "at what stage does a gambler's activities become a gambling problem?" lays at the heart of the GamCare beliefs, in that for the majority of people who do gamble the activity or subsequent result is not a problem, either for the person who is gambling or for people connected to that person. GamCare are there to help and support the unfortunate ones who are seriously affected, and to explain to all those involved in the problem why this has happened and how to move forward. It is also there to raise the awareness for us all in the gambling industry of our own social responsibilities for this unavoidable problem. Not just for voluntary financial

contributions, but in the way we work and look after those who really do need it.

"The Why" needs to go in to the realm of the gambling psyche, were the world is a tough place and the challenge to overcome the present situation "against the odds" can be acted out through the excessive and damaging outcome of sustained gambling, which has been beyond their means or affordability. The social impact and problems which then occur can be directly compared to that of drugs problems. There are many examples where several addictive tendencies are regularly displayed simultaneously. The complex nature of each individual case has to be taken into account with the help and support of the counsellors, where one rule is not for all, as the solution comes from within the individual.

Unlike drug abuse gambling is socially acceptable and so in many ways is not easily comparable. To illustrate this point I would ask if as a result of a gamble a large sum of cash was collected and not lost, does that gambler have a problem? To the

vast majority the answer is No, because he or she successfully predicted the outcome. That cannot be said for drugs. So the gambling action itself is not the problem, in reality consistently losing is.

The good news is that the gambling industry is a vibrant and indeed expanding market where a deep understanding of the gambler is a great advantage. They can naturally maximise income, in such a way which reflects market mainstream demand and which they know is socially responsible. So the activity which may have had a negative impact on an individual's life can be a work solution. My own personal experience has led to a deeper understanding and control of my own gambling, and total acceptance of my father's lifestyle. Could it do the same for you? Are you the type of person the industry is looking for? Or do you work in the industry and have no idea why people gamble? If so find out!

Jason McCreaney, Director of Sales
Capital Coin Machine Company

Nottingham Trent Professor wins "Outstanding Communicator" Award

Professor Mark Griffiths, a psychologist at Nottingham Trent University, has won an "outstanding communicator" award by British Association for the Advancement of Science.

Each year the British Association for the Advancement of Science honours five outstanding academic communicators with the opportunity to present a Prestige Award Lecture at the British A Festival of Science. Professor Griffiths is to be the recipient of the Joseph Lister Award (an award for someone from the social sciences).

The Award Lectures aim to promote open and informed discussion on issues involving science and actively encourage scientists to explore the social aspects of their research, providing them with reward and recognition for doing so.

Griffiths is Europe's only Professor in Gambling Studies and is internationally known for his work into gambling and gaming addictions. He is no stranger to disseminating his work and has appeared on well over 1200 radio and television programmes in the last 16 years. He has won many other awards including three international research awards for his work into gambling.

At 37, Griffiths is one of the youngest professors in the UK. His latest book is 'Gambling and Gaming Addictions In Adolescence' (BPS Blackwells).

The Award Lectures will be given during the BA's Festival of Science at the University of Exeter between 6 - 10 September 2004.

Professor Mark Griffiths, GamCare Trustee



Gambling Reform: More Harm Than Good?

Author:

Anton Kaszubowski

The Gambling Consultancy Limited

A majority of the public think gambling reform will do more harm than good according to a new report by YouGov and The Gambling Consultancy.

The survey conducted by YouGov last month among 2174 people across Great Britain found that despite widespread recognition that the modernisation of gambling laws will bring benefits, most people think more harm than good will come from the reforms.

Three quarters of the public recognise that making it easier for people to gamble will increase the amount of money paid to the government in taxes. And five out of ten people think new casinos will bring more jobs to an area. However, half of the public are not persuaded that making it easier for people to gamble and for casinos to attract customers will boost UK tourism.

Generally, the public do not think the gains will outweigh the losses. Three quarters of the public think that relaxing gambling laws will produce a "large increase" in problem gambling. It is this overwhelming concern that prompts more people to agree (64%) than disagree (24%) that "relaxing gambling laws will cause more problems than benefits".

Women and the elderly are most likely to think relaxing laws will do more harm than good. Even a majority of gamblers think there will be more problems than benefits; six out of ten people that have gambled via one mode or another in the last 7 days agree with the statement.

Commenting on the findings, Anton Kaszubowski of The Gambling Consultancy said, "clearly people's

concerns over problem gambling outweigh the potential economic benefits that they perceive. If the gambling industry is going to win public support for modernisation it is going to have to work harder to convince the public that embracing a socially responsible attitude and limiting any increase of problem gambling is, and always has been, at the heart of their commercial interests".

These thoughts were echoed last week at a major industry conference, hosted by The Gambling Consultancy, which addressed the major issues arising out of the Joint Scrutiny Committee's analysis of the draft gambling bill. Social responsibility was high on the agenda. Speaking at the conference Russell Hoyle, CEO of Leisure Link called for an increased focus on social responsibility as foundation for a successful modernisation of the industry. These thoughts were echoed by John Kelly, Chairman of Gala Group who challenged the industry to display unity, by finding common ground on areas, such as social responsibility.

Significantly, the YouGov survey found that many people are not only worried about others' susceptibility to addiction, but are also worried about their own discipline. Three out of ten people said they would not visit a casino because they are worried they could get "hooked".

Inquiries about the report 'Public attitudes towards gambling reform' should be directed to anton.kaszubowski@thegamblingconsultancy.co.uk or stefan.kaszubowski@yougov.com



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Social Responsibility - The Retailer's Perspective



Author:
Phil Horne, Director of Gaming - Coral

If a customer of a Coral betting shop had approached a member of staff 12 months ago asking about advice on problem gambling he/she would almost certainly have been greeted with a blank face....at best! Today's environment is somewhat different with Social Responsibility being a key part of Coral's training and development program.

The Gambling Bill process has been running for 3 years, is far from complete, but has achieved one notable success to date. The Bill has increased awareness of Social Responsibility and has influenced every sector of the gambling industry.

The major UK bookmakers were amongst the early supporters of the now named "Responsibility in Gambling Trust" (RIGT). This led to an agreed Social Responsibility and Good Practice Code between GamCare and the Bookmakers.

At Coral, we recognised a need for a more proactive stance in this area and therefore established our own process for change. Key to this approach was to ensure that we worked closely with a specialist within the field - GamCare proved to be the ideal partner with expert guidance provided by Paul Bellringer, Peter Cox and Teresa Tunstall.

The formulation of policies and procedures that would become the cornerstone of our training and operation became easier working alongside GamCare. The starting point (and most impactful) was to train every member of our retail estate - circa 4,000 staff. In order to help achieve this, Directors and Senior Operations Managers attended their own training session at GamCare HQ where Teresa and I facilitated. The

key messages were presented and the social consequences of problem gambling were vividly brought to life by the inclusion of GamCare helpline staff relaying their experiences. As a result of this session, every Coral shop manager attended a Social Responsibility training programme - led by their Regional Manager (their boss's boss). Each manager then trained the remaining members of their shop team. This process was successfully completed in the spring of this year.

Every member of our retail estate now understands their responsibilities including:

- Adherence to the Codes of Practice.
- In-shop merchandising.
- Customer self-exclusion policy.
- Training new recruits.

Heads of Department from all areas of the Coral business have attended similar training sessions and are developing policies to add to what has been achieved in the retail estate. Areas covered include telephone betting, customer care and our Greyhound Stadia.

My experience to date in the area of Social Responsibility has been a very positive one. Every Coral Manager has responded enthusiastically to their responsibilities and GamCare have proved to be very supportive in assisting Coral achieve their aims.

I have been able to speak directly to a small number of customers who have sought our help and that of GamCare. We assisted a taxi driver self-exclude himself from 26 Coral shops recently (and I know that William Hill and Ladbrokes have been equally helpful) - which resulted

in the customer supplying a separate photograph for each of the shops to help our staff enforce the Agreement. I have been conversing recently with the father of an 18-year old boy who had spent all of his savings (University pending).

These examples are rare, however, they do reinforce the message that for a small minority, gambling can become a problem and therefore gambling organisations do have a duty of care to protect and assist that minority.

What have Coral learned throughout this process?

- Gambling can be an enjoyable pastime but can harm a minority of vulnerable people.
- Social Responsibility has to be treated seriously by gambling operators.
- Training and awareness need to be resourced appropriately.
- GamCare are an ideal and essential partner.
- Social Responsibility is about customer service and common sense.
- Being able to help the small minority where gambling becomes a problem can be very rewarding.
- Gambling operators such as Coral can only react and respond to customers asking for help - staff cannot act in a proactive manner or assume that a customer has a problem.

What's next for Coral?

- We will develop Social Responsibility policies for non retail areas of our business.
- We will invite GamCare to audit our business as part of an ongoing review.
- We will strive to respond professionally and compassionately to all requests for help.