



GAMCARE

ANNUAL REVIEW 2014/15



PARTNER CASE STUDY 'It's massively improved my marriage'

My name's Ken and I'm 39. I first came across the services that Beacon offers online after contacting the *National Gambling HelpLine*. I'd been searching for something that could help me overcome my addiction as it was causing problems within my marriage. It was difficult for me to admit that I had a problem, but in order to help my relationship with my wife and control the amount of money I was losing I decided to seek out help. I worked out that I'd wasted anywhere from £25,000 to £100,000 on gambling over the years. To think about it now, it's a frightening amount of money, but I never saw it like that until I started getting counselling at Beacon. Before I started getting help for my addiction, all my money was spent on gambling. Now, because of Beacon, I spend my money on things that will benefit me and my wife. I am finally able to spend my money like any other normal person would.

THANK YOU

President: Lord Sharman of Redlynch OBE. **Vice Presidents:** Bill Galston OBE, John Brackenbury CBE.

Chairman: Sir Ian Prosser. **Trustees:** John Hagan, Ian McRobbie OBE TD DL, Prof. Peter Collins, Sir Geoffrey de Deney, Susanna Fitzgerald QC, Simon Thomas, Tom Kavanagh CBE, Dominic Harrison, Prof Jon Grant.



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INTRODUCTION

It is a pleasure to be writing my first foreword to GamCare's Annual Review. However, I must express sadness on behalf of all those involved in GamCare, either as supporters, clients or staff at the passing of my predecessor as Chairman, Anthony Jennens, in January 2015.

Over the past ten years, Anthony had been ceaseless in supporting the work of GamCare to prevent harm to those who gamble and ensuring support was in place for those who found themselves in difficulty.

2014/15 saw GamCare experience unprecedented growth in the delivery of its core services – advice through the Frontline Services and counselling treatment. The number of target calls received from those concerned about their gambling or that of a friend, partner or family member increased by 18% to 27,056. Similarly our counselling clients increased by 39% to 5,500. We are pleased with the expansion in our services and delivery, and that we were able to maintain the quality of our services at a high level.

Other achievements included the launch of our new website in October 2014. Aside from a refreshed look and feel, the website represented an expansion of our services with additional advice pages and a new self-assessment tool, designed to help people understand their issues and direct them to the appropriate advice. A second clinical conference was held in November 2014 and we were pleased to hear from a range of speakers followed by a lively panel debate.

I look forward to working with my fellow trustees, GamCare staff and partner organisations in future years as we build on our work to date. We are grateful for the support we receive from the

Responsible Gambling Trust and we were very pleased to sign a new grant funding agreement for the Helpline and Counselling services up to the end of March 2017.

We are now developing a new strategy, which in addition to continuing to develop our core services, will:

Develop GamCare as a Centre of Clinical Excellence for problem gambling, linked to a strong evidence base for our work

Provide a new focus on supporting specific vulnerable groups such as young people, students and prisoners

Strengthen the marketing and communications of our services - particularly highlighting local communities through our national Partner network


Develop additional sources of funding to support these initiatives, including leveraging public health funds and other national funding bodies

With funding in place and a new strategy, I am confident that GamCare can build on its success to date to provide support and advice to both those in difficulties through gambling or those who wish to mitigate the possible harm of gambling.


Sir Ian Prosser, Chairman of the Trustees
Dirk Hansen, Chief Executive



FRONTLINE SERVICES



HELPLINE & NETLINE		
	2014/15	2013/14
Calls Answered	40,946	30,648
Success Rate	85%	89%



WEBSITE, FORUM & CHATROOM		
	2014/15	2013/14
New Forum posts	40,810	34,684
Chat hours offered	324	499
Web – unique visitors	1,302,214	611,333

Helpline & NetLine

GamCare operates the *National Gambling Helpline*, which includes a Freephone telephone Helpline and online NetLine web chat. Our trained advisers are available 8am-Midnight, seven days a week.

We offer confidential help, support and advice to callers who are directly experiencing problems resulting from their gambling, as well as partners, family or friends of gamblers. Typical issues arising are debt, depression, anxiety and the breakdown of relationships.

In 2014/15 we answered 40,946 calls. This was a 29% increase on our answered calls for 2013/14 and demonstrates the increasing demand for our services and the impact of increased national advertising of the Helpline services throughout 2014. We were able to meet this increased demand through increased resourcing and with an 85% success rate in answering calls first time.

Website, Forum & Chatroom

Our online resources are invaluable for problem gamblers and affected others. In November 2014 we launched our new website. This

included new advice pages, which we see as a new Frontline service, recognising that for some people, the advice, support and guidance offered on these web pages will be sufficient help for them. To help people understand their gambling issues, the website includes a short interactive tool: 'GamTest', where through answering a number of questions, people can better focus on their specific issues with gambling and seek advice on the relevant pages. This has proven very popular with users.

The GamCare Forum was also redesigned as part of the new website build. Users now have their own dedicated profile areas. We see our moderated forum as a unique and sought after tool for peer-to-peer discussion and support. Particularly popular are the 'Recovery Diaries' kept by a number of users; these demonstrate both the successes and difficult journeys people encounter in overcoming their gambling problems and allow other users to offer advice and support.

We continue to hold moderated group Chatrooms online on weekday evenings, which provide a different format for peer-to-peer support. We are planning to continue to experiment with the Chatroom feature, offering different types of Chatrooms on specific topics.



TREATMENT SERVICES

GamCare offers free treatment, including a counselling service for anyone who is experiencing difficulties from a gambling problem – including partners, friends and family members.

GamCare counselling allows clients to talk about their situation and explore the causes of their gambling behaviour and the impact it is having on their life, as well as promoting strategies to create positive change.

The service is delivered by GamCare directly in London and through its network of GamCare Partners working across the country.

We are increasingly developing our treatment options for clients. A new psycho-educational group was pioneered during the year. This allows small groups of problem gamblers to collectively discuss their problems and how these can be addressed. Each week there is a different focus from looking at causes of problem gambling and behavioural triggers to looking at relapse prevention strategies. Participants receive a workbook that they use to support their treatment in the group. This group is conducted both face to face and online.

“Thank you very much, I really enjoyed the workshop and have gained a great deal from the day”

“Good session on learning about gambling, rationality and psychological addiction”

COUNSELLING

	2014/15	2013/14
London	448	386
Manchester	203	217
Online	121	78
Regional Partners	4,728	3,266
Total	5,500	3,947

GamCare Partners

Over 85% of our clients receive treatment through our national Partner network. This now comprises of 15 partners working across the country and a further affiliated partner working on the Isle of Man. During the year, national coverage increased to include Merseyside and Wirral, North Wales, Doncaster, Gloucestershire and Oxfordshire.

Counsellors working across the network have received specialist training in supporting problem gamblers and affected others from our clinical training team.

The strength of the Partner Network lies in the agencies’ ability to combine local knowledge and awareness of issues with central training and support. In addition to clients being referred through the *National Gambling HelpLine* (operated by GamCare), our partners can initiate targeted local awareness-raising campaigns tailored for local needs.



EDUCATION & RAISING AWARENESS

Professional Players Federation (PPF) working together with GamCare to deliver focused education and awareness to the professional sports sector.

During 2014 GamCare delivered a series of training to those PPF member associates, coaches and support staff who are in daily contact with athletes at their clubs. This training provided attendees with the tools to talk about problem gambling and how to provide 'first aid' to people seeking help, including where to signpost for advice and support. In December GamCare took part in the PPF National Conference at Edgbaston attended by 100 sports workers. The conference was aimed at sharing and developing best practice around problem gambling with speakers from The Responsible Gambling Trust, GamCare, the National Problem Gambling Clinic, LPP Consulting and Sporting Chance. The real life experiences of players formed a major part of the conference.

PARTNER CASE STUDY

'There is a light at the end of the tunnel'

My name's Kelly. I'm 32 and I have been gambling for three years. Over the three years of my gambling addiction, I lost around £25,000 in savings and overdrafts which caused massive problems. I read about GamCare and its local service through Beacon Counselling when I decided I needed to seek out help to control my gambling and spending. Beacon has made me realise that there is a light at the end of the tunnel. A lot of people don't realise that this is a problem that can be solved and you can get over it.





WORKING WITH THE INDUSTRY

Training - Social Responsibility & Interaction

We are building on our training development solutions to raise awareness and education within the gambling front line services and strategic management teams.

This knowledge sharing and learning is aimed at informing customer interaction, social responsibility and responsible gambling policy and practice.

Over 400 industry professionals attended GamCare training sessions during 2014/15 and more than 500 customer service agents registered for GamCare's ExTra e-learning.

Certification

Throughout 2014/15 GamCare accredited gambling businesses that demonstrated achievement of GamCare Certification standards in player protection and social responsibility.

GAMCARE CERTIFICATION



The Education and Prevention team are modernising Certification standards to respond to changes in UK licensing. These improved player protection standards are designed to assist the Operator to implement better informed choice for the customer, best use of responsible gambling tools and to recognise and respond to those who may be at risk of problem gambling.

Consultation

GamCare is privileged to take part in consultations with the Gambling Commission, the Responsible Gambling Strategy Board and the Responsible Gambling Trust aimed at improving social responsibility, education and prevention aimed to reduce the risk of gambling related harm.

PARTNER CASE STUDY

'The chip on my shoulder has finally gone'

I'm Steven, I'm 26 and at the age of 21 I developed a gambling addiction. When I started gambling I was going through a very hard time. I was having problems with my family, I was really unhappy in my job and I had not long lost my friend in Iraq. Gambling became a distraction for me to escape the problems I was dealing with. A friend had recommended Beacon Counselling to me (they had been previously) and I decided it was time I sought out help. Counselling has given me a new lease of life and I am so thankful. I feel happier in general now that I don't feel the need to gamble, which has led to a better relationship with my family. I think it's good for people to speak out like this and tell someone their problems. It worked for me and the chip on my shoulder has finally gone.



SPECIAL PROJECTS

Prisons

2014/15 saw further development of the work GamCare has been doing within Prisons across the UK. As ever, GamCare continues to provide information and advice in the form of leaflets and posters, as well as its telephone HelpLine services to all prisoners across the country. Prisoners can use their private phone call allocation to call us and in some cases are able to have a longer conversation in confidence with our advisers. The HelpLine team are specially trained to listen to the specific concerns of prisoners and advise them accordingly. After leaving prison, all prisoners are signposted to local counselling agencies in our Partner network, where they can receive expert, confidential counselling.

GamCare also provides one to one counselling services to problem gamblers within the prison service. We currently operate in three prisons and these services are all extremely busy. The outcomes for those clients were excellent and we are looking to further expand our prison programme.

We are continuing to develop our prisons training programme and will begin work with several prisons to train peer listeners and mentors in the issues around problem gambling. These services are intended to work alongside our existing provision.

“The interactive parts were very informative and interesting which will really help my future practice when working with young people”

Young People

GamCare has continued to improve its engagement with children and young adults this year. Specifically, we have extended the funding for our Youth Pilot in Bristol, which has been extremely successful. Through the youth pilot, ARA have provided information and advice, plus early interventions and treatment to young people. In addition, youth professionals from a variety of settings have been trained. Workshop evaluations have been very positive, with young people indicating that they have a better understanding of recognising and dealing with a gambling problem, and that they plan to either reduce the time or money that they spend on gambling.

GamCare is working with ARA to evaluate the programme and explore how it can be further developed.

BigDeal.org.uk has continued to receive a steady number of hits and users over the past year, with the majority of referrals coming from social media. The site is ready for a refresh, having been live for two years and we will be consulting with digital youth engagement charities and young people themselves to see how we can improve the site in the coming months.

GamCare acknowledges that the backbone of its services for young people must be that of treatment and that treatment provisions for young people must be different to those offered to adults. 2014/15 has seen the beginning of a process of consulting with other service providers to discuss the development of a treatment provision especially for young people. We hope to launch the treatment service in the next financial year.



PLANS FOR 15/16

Our plans for 2015/16 builds on the successes of 2014/15 and looks to how we can integrate, consolidate and develop our services to problem gamblers and affected others.

Centre of Clinical Excellence

We plan to develop and promote GamCare as a Centre of Clinical Excellence, both nationally and internationally. GamCare and its Partners have developed expertise in working with problem gamblers and those affected by gambling. We plan to focus on disseminating and sharing this expertise and knowledge through our existing Partner network and more widely through conferences, journals and papers related to problem gambling and related addiction issues. This work will be supported by the creation of a new research role.

Developing our Partner Network

We have reviewed our Partner network arrangements to promote more effective partner working. As part of our plans to promote GamCare as a Centre of Clinical Excellence, we are seeking to utilise the knowledge and expertise across the network through use of an online Clinical Forum, a new communications strategy across the network and increased involvement of counsellors and therapists across the network in developing treatments and modalities and sharing their knowledge and experience.

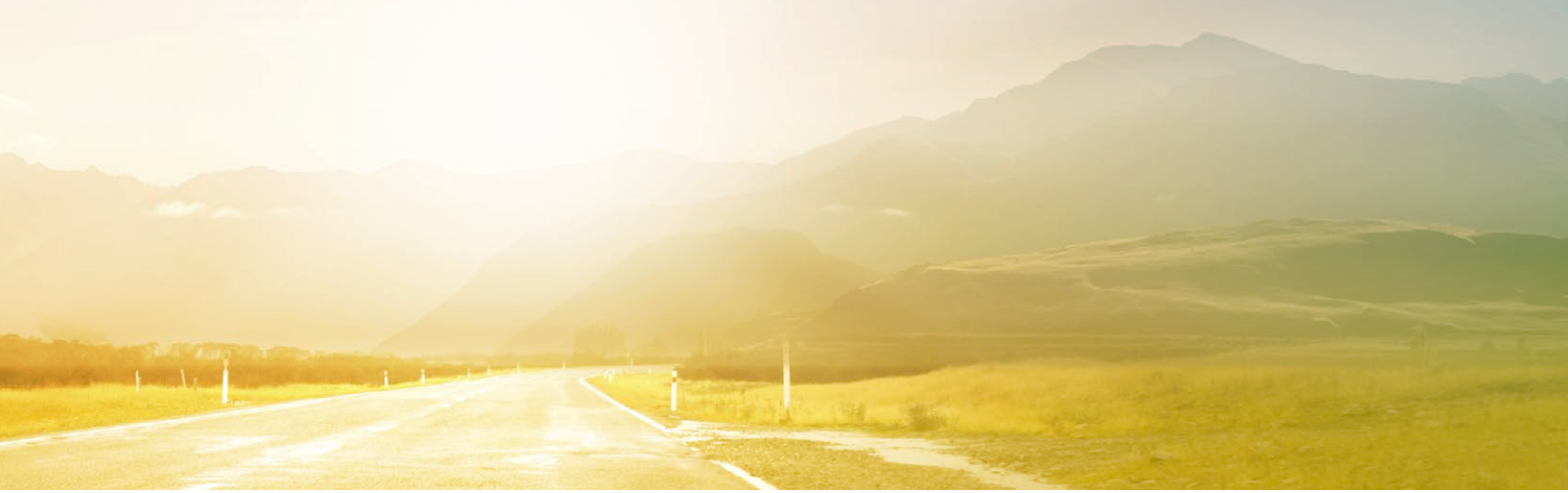
Developing Frontline & Treatment Services

On our Frontline services, we plan to continue to develop and refine the role of the website and frontline services tool as a support service to clients.

We will work to continue to develop the range of counselling treatment available to clients, and are looking to develop group work across the partner network where this is practically possible. We will also be trialling online group work and will be monitoring its effectiveness. We plan to expand our London service to include evening opening and introduce a new central London service to improve our whole London coverage and accessibility.

Working with the Responsible Gambling Trust

With increased funding for our Frontline and Counselling treatment secured until March 2017, we are committed to work effectively with the Responsible Gambling Trust to ensure funding is spent effectively and efficiently, resulting in both good outcomes and representing value for money. We are now implementing the Trust's Data Reporting Framework across our clinical services, which will allow a database to be developed both for client demographics and for evaluating the effectiveness of treatment. As part of this we are implementing an innovative follow-up process with all clients to determine the lasting efficacy of treatments.



Our Role with Young People

We plan to develop our Youth treatment work across the whole GamCare Partner network. This will involve providing training for counselling staff providing this work, recognising the specific demands of working with this cohort.

In conjunction with this we will continue to look at funding options to develop our education and awareness work, pioneered with our partner ARA in Bristol. We would like to extend both the geographic reach of this work and also assess the impact and effectiveness of the services and sessions offered to young people, their families and associated professional groups.

Developing our Work with the Gambling Industry

We will be undertaking a full review of our Certification programme and work with gambling businesses to ensure our products remain relevant, up to date and add value to our customers. We recognise that it is important that our work sets a high benchmark for player protection and stays abreast of both industry developments and trends in player behaviour.

Website & Social Media

We are planning a review of our new website, to determine how successful it has been and how it can be improved. We intend to integrate it fully with an expanded social media presence, both promoting and responding to queries about GamCare services and promoting the causes of problem gambling.

PARTNER CASE STUDY

'I am excited for the future'

I'm Marilyn and I have been battling a gambling addiction for ten years. This has led me to attempt suicide twice. I thought I was worthless and my kids would be better off without me. I heard about Beacon Counselling Trust from a friend after they launched their GamCare service in Liverpool and decided to go along for counselling. I knew I had a problem but at this point I was still in some denial. The addiction made me very unhappy and reclusive. I didn't know anyone else in the world because I was always gambling. Before my counselling, I couldn't remember a day for the last ten years when I hadn't gambled. Counselling has taught me how to stop gambling and because of that, I no longer feel suicidal and I am excited for the future, something I haven't felt in a very long time.





HelpLine

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NetLine

www.gamcare.org.uk

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The full set of data on which this review is based is available on our website www.gamcare.org.uk

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