



**NHS**

North West  
Ambulance Service

NHS Trust

# **NWAS GAMBLING SUPPORT GUIDANCE**

|                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Recommended by                | Tracey Gritt/Sandra Regan |
| Approved by                   | Katy Dodge                |
| Approval date                 | 11.12.2020                |
| Version number                | 1.0                       |
| Review date                   | 11.12.2021                |
| Responsible Director          | Lisa Ward                 |
| Responsible Manager (Sponsor) | Katy Dodge                |
| For use by                    | All Trust Employees       |

This framework is available in alternative formats on request.  
 Please contact the Corporate Governance Office on 01204  
 498400 with your request.

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 2 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

## Change record form

| Version | Date of change | Date of release | Changed by                                    | Reason for change  |
|---------|----------------|-----------------|---|--|
| 0.1     | 02.11.20       |                 | Sandra Regan on behalf of Mike Atkinson       | Re-worded due to error in sentence   |
| 0.2     | 02.11.20       |                 | Sandra Regan on behalf of Gary Blackburn      | Appendix 1 – inserted sentence regarding line manager/TU support                               |
| 0.3     | 07.12.20       |                 | Sandra Regan as per Lisa Ward recommendations | to include further support for Managers initiating conversations and signposting               |
| 0.4     | 11.12.20       |                 | Sandra Regan on behalf of Katy Dodge          | Wording for OH section 6.0 changed to Occupational Health. IY site url removed<br>7.6 reworded |
| 1.0     | 11.12.20       | 14.12.20        | Sandra Regan                                  | Finalised version released   |

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 3 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

## Contents

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Introduction   | Page 5  |
| Our Organisational and Cultural Commitment                       | Page 5  |
| Indicators of Gambling-Harm                                      | Page 6  |
| Suicidal thoughts, suicidal attempts, and non-suicidal self-harm | Page 7  |
| Self-help for Gambling Harm                                      | Page 7  |
| Support  | Page 7  |
| Guidance for Managers  | Page 8  |
| Key principles of Health and Wellbeing Conversations             | Page 9  |
| Appendix 1 – Support Available                                   | Page 10 |

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 4 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2017, the Great British Gambling Commission stated, *‘problem gambling is a public health concern’*.
- 1.2 No one should suffer alone, and here at NWAS, we support and encourage our staff to come forward and seek the help and support they may require. For the purpose of this guidance, gambling disorder, otherwise known as problem gambling, is defined as *‘the desire or urge to gamble, despite it having a negative or harmful effect on the player’s life or the lives of those closest to the gambler. It is seen as a serious condition and an addiction, which can cause a wide range of problems from mental health issues to financial debt.’*
- 1.3 According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), the burden of harm on those diagnosed with Gambling Disorder (GD) is of a similar magnitude to the harm attributed to major depressive disorder or alcohol misuse and dependence. The burden of harm on these gamblers is also *“substantially higher than harm attributed to drug dependence disorder”*.
- 1.4 Gambling-harm refers to a syndrome of symptoms, which is most severe in problem gamblers. However, significant harm can affect other classifications of gamblers, including low-risk harm gamblers, and moderate-risk harm gamblers. Significant gambling-harm can also be suffered by affected others and as legacy-harm in former gamblers.
- 1.5 According to the most recent and the largest gambling prevalence study in Great Britain (2019), 7.2%, 3.3%, and 2.7% suffered low-risk gambling harm, moderate-risk harm, and problem gambling harms, respectively, in the last 12-months. Similarly, the last well-designed prevalence study in 2010, which is considered seminal literature, reflected 5.5%, 1.8%, and 1.2% respectively. NWAS employs just over 6,000 staff, and as such, there could be 500 - 800 staff members who may be suffering significant harm due to their own gambling in the past year. And of this, 70 – 160 of staff members may be suffering the most severe level of gambling harm (problem gambler). Moreover, scientific evidence indicates that a typical problem gambler affects more people, and so the above figures are likely to be an underestimation of the true extent of gambling-harm amongst our staff.
- 1.6 The following guidance is intended to support anyone who has been affected by gambling, whether through their gambling (past or present), or as an affected other. Gambling harm can affect all regardless of race, disability, sex, age, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, religion, belief, or sexual orientation.

## 2.0 Our Organisational and Cultural Commitment

- 2.1 North West Ambulance Service (NWAS) is committed to support staff to help alleviate the pressure and stress caused with Gambling harm. If we understand more about the factors that may increase the risk, then we may be able to reduce the risk within our workplace. There are a number of factors that research based evidence suggests may increase an individual’s risk of Gambling harm such as:-

- Have had a recent loss or change, such as divorce, job loss, retirement or death of a loved one

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 5 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

- Often feel bored or lonely, or have a history of risk-taking or impulsive behaviour
- Have financial problems
- Have few interests or hobbies, or feel their lives lack direction
- Have a history of mental health problems, particularly depression and anxiety
- Have been abused or traumatized
- Have a parent who also has (or has had) problems with gambling
- Have (or have had) problems with alcohol or other drugs, gambling or overspending

2.2 We recognise that these factors may apply to our current employees. The guidance is designed not only to support employees who are at risk of gambling harm, but also to help employees to be able to support co-workers, and direct them to appropriate means of support. Early identification and support can significantly reduce the risk of Gambling harm within our workforce. Appendix one provides support available to staff.

### 3.0 Indicators of Gambling-Harm

3.1 A study by Langham et al., identified a taxonomy of gambling-harms, which included examples of harm from modalities including financial, relationship disruption, conflict, or breakdown, emotional or psychological, decrements to health, cultural, criminal, and reduced performance at work.

3.2 In addition to this, the following emotional or psychological distress could also indicate and be causative of a reduced ability at work:

- Feelings of powerlessness,
- Experience of distorted cognitions or erroneous beliefs,
- Emotional and psychological distress caused by living outside of your value system,
- Emotional or psychological distress of hiding gambling from others (including lying and creating alibis for lost time and money),
- Reduced feelings of self-worth and pride,
- Increased feelings of shame,
- Perceptions of being stigmatised.
- Increased feelings of inadequacy or personal failing because of inability to control gambling to recreational levels
- Emotional or psychological distress of inability to control gambling
- Increased feelings of insecurity and vulnerability
- Emotional or psychological distress caused by other harms
- Emotional or psychological distress due to harm caused to others (guilt)
- Loss of “face” or reputation due to impact of other harms
- Desperation from not being able to recoup losses.  
Emotional or psychological distress of not wanting to accept problems with gambling
- Loss of sense of future or ability to get ahead
- Fear and distress from follow up and harassment by creditors (legal and illegal)

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 6 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

## 4.0 Suicidal thoughts, suicidal attempts, and non-suicidal self-harm

4.1 Suicide is the leading cause of death among young people in England. Prevention of suicide is a key priority for the government and, according to data on past-year gambling from the most recent Adult Psychiatry Morbidity Survey (2007), the following statistics apply for problem gamblers:

- 60.4% of problem gamblers experienced fatigue, 50.7% sleep problems, 41.8% irritability, and 39.4% have problems with concentration and forgetfulness
- 49.1% of problem gamblers had harmful or hazardous use of alcohol whereas the rate in non-problem gamblers was 21.3%
- 37.6% of problem gamblers were regular smokers whereas the rate for non-problem gamblers was 21.3%
- 20.9% of problem gamblers had felt that life was not worth living, 17.1% had wished they were dead, and 19.2% had thought about suicide. For non-problem gamblers, the estimated rates were 6.0%, 4.7% and 4.1%, respectively
- 19.0% of problem gamblers had at least one sign of dependence on an illicit drug compared with 8.2% of at-risk gamblers, and 3.2% of non-problem gamblers
- 12.8% of problem gamblers had post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) whereas this rate was 5.1% for at-risk (low-risk & moderate-risk harm gamblers) and 2.7% for non-problem gamblers.
- 11.0% of problem gamblers experienced violence at work. For at-risk (low-risk & moderate-risk gamblers), this was 5.3%, and for non-problem gamblers, 2.7%
- 4.7% of problem gamblers were estimated to have had a suicidal attempt in the past year. For at-risk (low-risk & moderate-risk harm gamblers) the rate was estimated at 1.2% and non-problem gambler level 0.6%

## 5.0 Self-help for Gambling Harm.

5.1 The biggest step to overcoming a gambling addiction is realising that you have a problem. It takes tremendous strength and courage to own up to this, especially if you have lost a lot of money and strained or broken relationships along the way.

5.2 Strengthen your support network. It's tough to battle any addiction without support, so reach out to friends and family. Reach out to colleagues at work, either your line manager or someone you work closely with.

5.3 Join a peer support group. Gamblers Anonymous, for example, is a 12-step recovery program patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. A key part of the program is finding a sponsor, a former gambler who has experience remaining free from addiction and can provide you invaluable guidance and support.

5.4 Seek help for underlying mood disorders. Depression, stress, substance abuse, or anxiety can both trigger gambling problems and be made worse by compulsive gambling. Even when gambling is no longer a part of your life, these problems will still remain, so it's important to address them.

## 6.0 Support

6.1 NWAS would like to make sure staff are aware of the range of support available to them via the following routes:

- Occupational Health
- Line Manager
- HR
- Staff Side
- NWAS Invest in Yourself microsite via the Green Room

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 7 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

6.2 Appendix 1 shows an extensive list of further support available to anyone who may be struggling with Gambling Harm.

## 7.0 Guidance for Managers

7.1 This section provides Managers with the necessary skills and guidance to support staff if they are struggling with Gambling issues.

7.2 Your role as a line manager/supervisor is an important one to anyone who may be experiencing issues with gambling. It may be difficult to start the initial conversation if you notice changes in behaviours that may be linked to problem gambling. The following will help you to identify if someone in your team is struggling with compulsive gambling and is a useful tool to use when you sit down with them:

### How do I know if I'm a problem gambler?

Score 0 for each time you answer "never"

Score 1 for each time you answer "sometimes"

Score 2 for each time you answer "most of the time"

Score 3 for each time you answer "almost always"

| Question  | Score |
|---|-------|
| Do you bet more than you can afford to lose?  |       |
| Do you need to gamble with larger amounts of money to get the same feeling?   |       |
| Have you tried to win back money you have lost (chasing losses)?  |       |
| Have you borrowed money or sold anything to get money to gamble?  |       |
| Have you wondered whether you have a problem with gambling?   |       |
| Has your gambling caused you any health problems, including feelings of stress or anxiety?  |       |
| Have other people criticised your betting or told you that you had a gambling problem (regardless of whether or not you thought it was true)? |       |
| Has your gambling caused any financial problems for you or your household?  |       |
| Have you ever felt guilty about the way you gamble or what happens when you gamble?   |       |
| Total score   |       |

\* Questionnaire source – NHS Choices website 2019

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 8 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |



- 7.3 If the total score is eight or higher, this indicates that there may be a problem with gambling and further support should be discussed to identify any support the individual may need (see appendix 1).
- 7.4 As a manager you will need to establish an agreed approach on how to proceed and preferably, follow up on any discussions in a timely manner to ensure the individual is being supported. A referral to Occupational Health may be appropriate at this point if agreed by the individual.
- 7.5 Managers will need to remember that everyone's situation will be different and therefore, varying levels of support may be required depending on individual circumstances.
- 7.6 There may be times where a manager feels they themselves need additional support whether this is related to a staff member or triggered a personal response. In this circumstance, we urge you to inform your immediate line manager and/or access the support helplines cited in Appendix one.

## 8.0 Key principles of Health and Wellbeing Conversations

- 8.1 At their heart, Health and Wellbeing Conversations are a way for two people to connect together to identify individual health and wellbeing needs. They can be facilitated by line managers or another trusted person. As a facilitator, this means:
- Sharing time with a colleague and listening to how they are
  - Normalising that it's okay to feel a range of emotions in response to their experiences
  - Supporting them to identify what is within their control to nurture their own wellbeing
  - Helping them to build a wellbeing plan to manage the impact of COVID-19 and other high impact working situations
  - Signposting where they can go for further help, including accessing health and wellbeing support, and helping enlist that help promptly where needed
- 8.2 These conversations are a starting point, where facilitators connect with participants, listen, and are prepared to support people with 'where to from here'
- 8.3 These conversations are about offering space for listening and helping with further support, if needed. Not everyone will be coming to their Health and Wellbeing Conversation from a place of difficulty or feeling like they're struggling. Some people might be feeling good and want to make a plan with you for staying that way. This includes making a plan for managing wellbeing moving forward. You don't need specialist training, just kindness and compassion.
- 8.4 Approach these conversations with the intention of listening to the other person and enabling them to think more clearly about their needs. We would not recommend a prescribed approach: being yourself is important. We recognise this way of working will be more comfortable for some than others to start with and we encourage you to work with the material and others as you learn through the experience.

|                           |  |                |              |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|--------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 9 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0          |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final        |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021   |

## Support Available

If you are experiencing gambling harm your manager and trade union representative are available to offer support, alternatively you may wish to consider the following (please note, all links are clickable from the headings of each support sections):

### Problem gambling

#### [All Bets are off](#)

The All Bets Are Off podcast was established in April 2020 as a gambling addiction recovery podcast. Diverse portfolio of listening content covers a wide range of discussion points includes everything from recovery stories and signposting through to chats with industry specialists and a wanting for positive change and re-form.

#### [Recover me App](#)

Manage a gambling addiction from your pocket. This app was designed with the help of psychologists, psychiatrists and those others suffering from gambling addiction. All NWAS staff will receive free membership, simply email the team for your NWAS code.

#### [BeGambleAware.org](#)

A website that gives advice on gambling responsibly – this means making choices based on all the facts, and staying in control of how much time and money you spend.

#### [The Christian Centre for Gambling Rehabilitation](#)

A Chinese Christian charity established in 1996 that helps mainly Chinese-speaking problem gamblers to stop gambling and recover from their addiction and its adverse effects. They provide information, advice and support services which include counselling, money advice and group meetings to pathological gamblers and their relatives and friends.

#### [Gam-Anon](#)

Support to those affected by another person's gambling. A fellowship of men and women who are husbands, wives, relatives or close friends who have been affected by problem gambling.

#### [Gamblers Anonymous](#)

National helpline number:  
02073 843040

A fellowship of men and women who have joined together to do something about their own gambling problem and to help other compulsive gamblers do the same.

#### [Gamban](#)

Gamban is an easy to use application which blocks online gambling on all installed devices. It is available across all platforms and helps people who want to stop gambling from accessing gambling sites and apps.

#### [Gamblock](#)

Gamblock helps prevent gambling sites running on your PC. Once downloaded, users are directed to the GamBlock website when trying to access a gambling website. The GamBlock website also provides advice to people who have problems controlling their gambling.

|                           |  |                |               |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 10 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0           |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final         |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021    |

### [GamCare](#)

National helpline number:  
0808 8020133

A registered charity that takes a non-judgemental approach to gambling, and a leading authority on the provision of information, advice and practical help in addressing the social impact of gambling.

### [Gordon Moody Association](#)

Tel: 01384 241292

Provides residential treatment for severely addicted gamblers, as well as providing outreach support and internet counselling service.

### **Consumer support**

#### [Citizens Advice](#)

Helps people resolve their legal, money and other problems by providing free information and advice, and by influencing policymakers.

### **Debt support organisations**

#### [Money Advice Service](#)

An independent service, set up by government, to help people manage their money.

#### [Debt Advice Foundation](#)

A UK debt advice charity offering free, confidential support and advice to anyone worried about debt.

#### [Debt Support Trust](#)

Tel: 0800 058 0226

A not for profit debt charity with trained, friendly debt advisors ready to advise you on available debt solutions.

#### [National Debtline](#)

National helpline number: 08088 084000

Provides free confidential and independent advice on how to deal with debt problems.

#### [StepChange Debt Charity](#)

Tel: 0800 138 1111

A debt advice organisation offering free, confidential and impartial debt help to anyone who needs it, available online 24 hours a day.

### [Hub of Hope](#)

The Hub of Hope is a national mental health database which brings together organisations and charities, large and small, from across the country. This will enable staff members to locate local services within their area.

### [Occupational Health](#)

NWAS offer a counselling service through Occupational Health

Tel: 0161 419 5677/5491 or Email: [NWASOH@Stockport.nhs.uk](mailto:NWASOH@Stockport.nhs.uk)

Details for logging on via website:

- Username: employee
- Password: NWAS

|                           |  |                |               |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 11 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0           |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final         |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021    |

### Employee Assistance Provision (EAP) - 24-hour confidential support service

Telephone access to qualified professionals, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. Practical support for problems at work and home including: stress, family difficulties, relationships, health, finances, bereavement, anxiety, depression, workplace issues and trauma. To access the service, simply call 03303 800658

### **Peer Networks**

There are a number of peer networks in operation within NWS to offer a listening ear:-

- [Bluelight.champions@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:Bluelight.champions@nwas.nhs.uk)
- [CALEOC@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:CALEOC@nwas.nhs.uk); [CAMEOC@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:CAMEOC@nwas.nhs.uk)
- [Peer.support@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:Peer.support@nwas.nhs.uk)
- [111.peersupport@nwas.nhs.uk](mailto:111.peersupport@nwas.nhs.uk)

|                           |  |                |               |
|---------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Gambling Support Guidance |  | Page:          | Page 12 of 12 |
| Author:                   | Employee Engagement Advisor/Tracey Gritt | Version:       | 1.0           |
| Date of Approval:         | 11.12.2020                               | Status:        | Final         |
| Date of Issue:            | 14.12.2020                               | Date of Review | 11.12.2021    |