

ADPH NE Gambling Harms Programme Newsletter August 2026

Welcome to the Association of Directors of Public Health North East (ADPH NE) Gambling Harms Programme newsletter. The Gambling Harms Programme is developing a regional, public health approach to tackling gambling harms. This bi-monthly newsletter shares local, regional, and national updates, latest research, training and networking opportunities, and news on gambling-related harms.

In this edition...

We spotlight local prevention activity from Cedarwood Trust, share the refusal of a betting shop application in Sunderland and proposed changes to national legislation, and provide a detailed briefing on the first academic publication from the programme.

We also include updates on new financial risk assessments, a national consultation into unlicensed gambling sponsorship, and the full annual report from the GSGB, alongside our Research Corner and local publications.

Thank you for your continued efforts in working to address gambling harms.



Local Support Spotlight

Cedarwood Trust launches Safe Choices – A community approach to gambling harm prevention

The Cedarwood Trust is proud to deliver Safe Choices, a community-based prevention, education, and early intervention programme supporting people experiencing gambling-related harm, as well as family members, friends and others affected by someone else's gambling.

Safe Choices has been developed using a public health approach, recognising that gambling-related harm can affect anyone and that early conversations can make a real difference. Our aim is to reduce stigma, increase understanding and provide a welcoming space where people can access information, practical support, and guidance without judgement.

Through one-to-one support, group learning sessions, community awareness activities and lived experience events, we help people build confidence, understand gambling-related harm, and explore the support available to them. Where specialist intervention is appropriate, we collaborate with partner organisations to make warm referrals and ensure individuals access the right support at the right time.

Cedarwood Trust is also working closely with local organisations to improve awareness of gambling-related harm, reduce stigma and strengthen referral pathways across the region.

To find out more or discuss partnership opportunities:

☎ 0330 094 8454

✉ info@cedarwoodtrust.com

🌐 www.cedarwoodtrust.com

Cedarwood

Nurture – Nourish – Thrive

Sunderland City Council Blocks Betting Shop Application

A bid to open a betting shop in Sunderland's railway station has been refused following concerns about gambling-related harms and public health.

The council received 25 public objections during consultation. Concerns were raised about the level of gambling harms already present in the community, the high level of existing access to gambling premises, and the increased risk of the central location of the proposal.

Find more information [here](#).

Latest News

[BBC News: Councils to get more powers to stop vape and betting shops, PM announces](#)

The government has announced plans to remove the 'aim to permit' rule from the Gambling Act 2005, which currently restricts the ability of local councils to refuse applications for new gambling premises. Councils will have more power to control what businesses open in town centres, as part of a larger plan to improve high streets across England.

Details of the proposed changes are yet to be announced.

[BBC News: Online gamblers betting more than £1,000 to face new checks](#)

The Gambling Commission will introduce new financial risk assessments to identify and support people who are gambling online and experiencing financial difficulties.

Once fully implemented, Financial Risk Assessments will be applied to customers aged 25 years or older who spend over £1,000 in a 24-hour period or £3,000 over a 90-day period. People under the age of 25 will have lower thresholds.

The staged introduction of these checks will commence following engagement with industry and stakeholders.

Find more information on financial risk assessments [here](#).



Practitioner perspectives on addressing gambling harms within substance misuse services: a qualitative study in the North East of England

This is the first academic publication of the ADPH NE Gambling Harms Programme. This research project was identified as a priority research area by the ADPH NE Gambling Related Harms Network and was supported by Newcastle University, Middlesbrough Council, and the Office for Health Improvements and Disparities (OHID).

Read the full research article [here](#).

About the research:

This research investigates the barriers and facilitators to identifying and responding to gambling-related harms in substance misuse services in the North East of England.

Thirty-four professionals were interviewed from specialist charity services, local authorities, and primary care treatment services across the North East of England. Thematic analysis of the interviews identified key themes, highlighting the significant challenges experienced by professionals when addressing gambling-related harms among people accessing substance misuse support.

Key Findings:

- There is limited formal training provided to professionals and low awareness of gambling-related harms and how to signpost to support.
- Stigma is a significant barrier to service users disclosing gambling-related harms.
- Professionals reported that gambling-related harms are often not prioritised by senior staff and management, limiting capacity to respond when harms are identified.
- Greater clarity is needed regarding the role and responsibilities of professionals when gambling-related harms are not within the scope of commissioned services.
- There is a lack of consistent, available screening questions for gambling-related harms in substance misuse settings, resulting in these harms remaining hidden.

'No, we haven't [had any training]'

– Male, Community and Outreach Worker

'Stigma plays a huge part, so if I'm not wanting to come forward to seek any help. Then, no one would know those consequences until it's potentially too late'

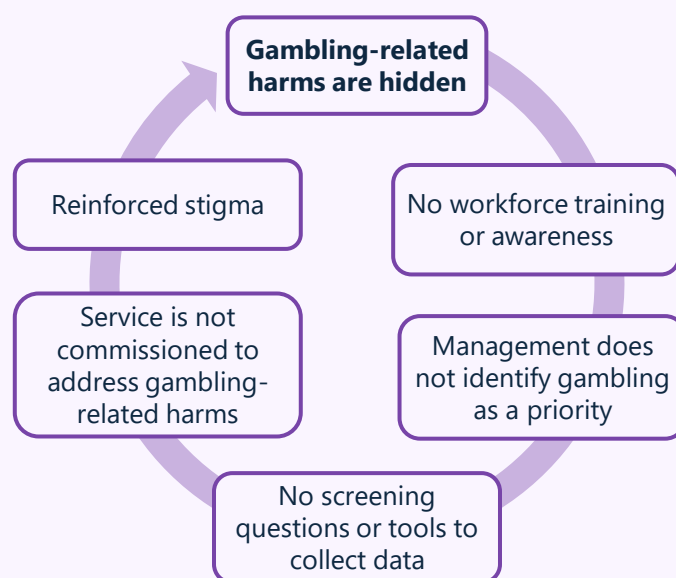
– Male, Practitioner

'At the moment I personally haven't, and as far as I know, there wouldn't be anything where that [gambling] would be on the agenda'

– Female, Recovery Worker

'I don't think there's a set of specific questions. Could be something that would be a good idea to change'

– Female, Homelessness Worker



Note: Figure has been adapted for the purpose of this newsletter.

Implications for Policy and Practice

Addressing gambling-related harms within substance misuse services requires top-down support from commissioners, senior staff, and management. There is a need for targeted funding, increased workforce training, dedicated roles, and a clear referral pathway into gambling treatment and support.

The identified challenges are not unique to substance misuse settings, highlighting the cross-cutting nature of these issues. This research highlights the need for increased strategic investment to ensure effective support for individuals experiencing gambling-related harms.

For more information, contact Dr Andrew Richardson at: Andrew.Richardson@newcastle.ac.uk

There has been no direct or indirect gambling industry involvement in any part of this research.

Consultation on banning unlicensed gambling sponsorship

The government has announced a consultation on banning unlicensed gambling sponsorship. The ban would prohibit advertising and sponsorship agreements with gambling operators without a Gambling Commission license.

The consultation is accepting evidence from all parties with an interest in how gambling is regulated in Great Britain and will close at 11:59pm on 9th September 2026.

Find more information on the consultation [here](#).

Gambling Commission: Gambling Survey for Great Britain Annual Report

The full report for the Gambling Survey for Great Britain (GSGB) has been published. This is the third annual report on gambling participation, behaviours, attitudes and consequences across Great Britain.

Read the full report [here](#).

RESEARCH CORNER

These articles have been checked for any conflict of interest or industry funding. None were identified.

Parental Influence on Adolescent Gambling: The Role of Communication, Rules, and Social Support

Read [here](#).

Preventing Gambling Related Harm in Adolescents: PRoGRAM-A pilot cluster RCT - Synopsis Report

Read [here](#).

Gambling adverts on social media reach 2.3 times more men than women: Using the Meta Ad library to assess gambling advertising in Ireland

Read [here](#).

Psychological mechanisms in video game monetization: A typology of contemporary strategies beyond loot boxes

Read [here](#).

***Please note:** Some articles use the term "problem gambling". This is not a preferred term in public health, as it can be stigmatising and does not acknowledge the addictive design and marketing tactics of gambling products.

Local Publications

A gambling health needs assessment is a systematic approach to identifying unmet need and health inequalities within a community, clarifying what must change to improve outcomes using local strengths and resources. It helps inform policy, strengthen service collaboration, guide effective interventions, and shape research priorities.

→ Gambling Harms in the North East: Regional Health Needs Assessment

Read [here](#).

→ Gambling-Related Harms in Sunderland: Health Needs Assessment

Read [here](#).

→ Newcastle City Council Gambling and Gambling-Related Harms: Needs Assessment

Read [here](#).

→ County Durham Gambling Health Needs and Assets Assessment

Read [here](#).

→ Hartlepool Borough Council: Gambling Health Needs Assessment

Read [here](#).

→ Darlington Borough Council: Gambling-Related Harms Health Needs Assessment

Read [here](#).

The ADPH NE Gambling Harms Lived Experience Forum

The forum is open to anyone living in the North East, aged 18+ and who have lived experiences of gambling harms, either from their own gambling or someone else's.

Forum members offer insight and expertise to local and regional work to address gambling harms. Members are offered a £25 voucher per hour for their participation.

To register your interest in joining the forum, please fill in the form [here](#).

For further information, please email:

GHR@middlesbrough.gov.uk

