**Reducing Gambling Harms in your Local Authority**

**Here are some recommendations of how to begin or continue working to reduce gambling harms in your local authority.**

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|  | **Begin your Health Needs Assessment on Gambling Harms** |
|  | **Understanding the extent of gambling harms in your local authority will help to inform the interventions and prevention work that needs to take place. The first step to take is to conduct a health needs assessment for gambling harm. Data can help to illustrate the levels of harm and the need for intervention within your local authority. There are various data collection opportunities that you can think about. Consider engaging with the local community treatment provider and NHS provider for treatment data by postcode.**  **You could connect with your local Citizens Advice who can ask their service users about gambling related harms and their experiences. They can then report this back to your local authority. Think about opportunities to ask your service users in public health settings about gambling related harms, for example in annual health surveys to your wider population or at in-house services, such as alcohol and substance misuse appointments that are already taking place.**  **Think about a one-off survey that you could send out to residents within your local authority to capture data on gambling related harms. Questions could include:**   * **What forms of gambling have you engaged in?** * **How often do you gamble?** * **What gambling harms have you experienced?** * **Have you been negatively impacted by someone else’s gambling?** * **If you were experiencing negative impacts of gambling, what kinds of support would you welcome?**   **For questions about gambling harms, we recommend writing statements, such as ‘I have struggled to pay my bills because of gambling’, that survey participants can tick or cross. This way your dataset will be consistent and participants can tick all harms that they may have directly or indirectly experienced.**  **We recommend making it optional to leave contact details if participants would like a further conversation about gambling harms. It is a good idea to signpost to** [**‘help for problems with gambling’**](https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/addiction-support/gambling-addiction/) **on the NHS website too and to your own local authority web page on gambling harm support.** |
|  | **Collaborate with colleagues across your local authority** |
|  | **Gambling harms are a cross cutting issue. We recommend collaborating with licensing, family services, financial services, housing teams, domestic abuse teams, drug and alcohol services, suicide prevention services and any other services that may be impacted by gambling harms. Engage elected members around the importance of this agenda and seek their leadership.**  **This way your work on gambling harms will have a whole systems approach. Do your colleagues in these teams know about the scope of gambling harms? This could be something that you could give them insight into using the gambling harms slide deck. Additionally, they may be able to assist you with data collection and future interventions to reduce gambling harms.** |
|  | **Update your website to make sure gambling harms support services are signposted clearly** |
|  | **It is essential that we are providing accessible information for the public to know what gambling harms are and where they can seek support if they are impacted by gambling harms either directly or indirectly as an affected other. Please follow the recently updated** [**MECC webpage**](https://www.meccgateway.co.uk/nenc/services/Gambling%20Harms) **to find out about which services and tools you can signpost to on your website.**  **This is also a great opportunity to check that the language choices on your website do not reinforce stigma. The** [**language guide**](https://www.adph.org.uk/networks/northeast/resources/words-can-hurt-language-guide-for-gambling-harms/) **makes this really simple to do and it also has a list of commonly searched terms that could be embedded into your site to help local residents find this information through search engines. It is a good idea to place links to gambling harm support under multiple sections, such as financial wellbeing as well as public health.** |
|  | **Create a steering group for gambling harms for your local authority** |
|  | **A steering group is a great way to bring together different voices from your community. This might include community leaders, services such as Citizens Advice and other members of your local authority, such as licensing colleagues. Ensuring it reports through a relevant governance structure such as the Health and Wellbeing Board will give important meaning to this work. An action plan can build capacity amongst the system and upskill your stakeholders. Working with community leaders to raise awareness of gambling harms and make them aware of your work may help you access more voices in your community. It could also be an opportunity for you to give them some training on how to have conversations about gambling harm and talk them through where they can seek help if they are worried about someone.** |
|  | **Build your Action Plan** |
|  | **Your action plan will no doubt be informed by your needs assessment but there are some important strategic themes to consider that you can start to think about:**   * **Support and partnerships** * **Advocacy** * **Media, Communications** * **Treatment & Education** * **Data, Research & Evaluation** * **Licensing** * **Protecting young people from harm** * **Lived experience** * **Commercial Determinants** |
|  | **Engage with lived experience** |
|  | **Working with people with lived experience of gambling harms is vital to ensure our work is having a meaningful impact. In the early days of your work, engaging with those with lived experience of gambling harms may help to inform initial recommendations in your HNA. Think about lived experience networks already established in your local authority that you may be able to ask initially.** |
|  | **Attend the regional network meetings** |
|  | **Regional network meetings are a space for learning and collaboration. It is a space where we aspire to share best practice with public health professionals across the North East. This gives your local authority the opportunity to build regional alliances and have insight into the national picture of gambling related harms.** |

**Relevant Resources:**

**MECC Webpage:** [**Gambling Harms**](https://www.meccgateway.co.uk/nenc/services/Gambling%20Harms)

**Words can Hurt: Language** [**Guide**](https://www.adph.org.uk/networks/northeast/resources/words-can-hurt-language-guide-for-gambling-harms/) **for gambling harms**

**LGA Tackling gambling related harm:** [**A whole council approach**](https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/tackling-gambling-related-harm-whole-council-approach)

**NICE** [**draft guidelines**](https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/gid-ng10210/documents/draft-guideline) **on Harmful Gambling**

**OHID Gambling treatment and support in England:** [**main findings and methodology**](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/gambling-treatment-need-and-support-prevalence-estimates/gambling-treatment-need-and-support-in-england-main-findings-and-methodology)

**Gambling Commission** [**Young People and Gambling report**](https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/report/young-people-and-gambling-2023)