

What are we doing about gambling harms in Yorkshire and the Humber?

A snapshot of our 3-year regional funded programme (2021-2024)

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What is the gambling harms programme?

Gambling-related harm is a growing public health concern with diverse impacts on individuals and overall community health and wellbeing. Current statistical estimates indicate **that 60.8% of people gambled in the past 12 months in Yorkshire & Humber**, with **3.6% 'at-risk'** and **0.7% gambling at 'problem'** level.

As a regional response to prevent and reduce gambling harms, a successful bid was made to the Gambling Commission on behalf of the Yorkshire and the Humber Association of Directors of Public Health (YH ADPH) for regulatory settlement funding, resulting in a 3-year programme of work on prevention, education, and awareness-raising to reduce gambling-related harms.

PROGRAMME VISION:

'People in Yorkshire and the Humber are protected from the direct and indirect harms of gambling at individual, community and population level; those in need are able to access quality and effective information, support and treatment, as early as possible and without fear of stigma.'

The programme has two broad strategic components:

- Education and awareness-raising to prevent and reduce gambling-related harms
- Improving access to information, support, and treatment.

What have we done so far?

- Gained lived experience [insight](#) through research and focus groups
- Conducted a mapping review of gambling support and information resources
- Disseminated a training needs assessment on gambling harms amongst the professional workforce in Y&H
- Conducted a regional marketing campaign (currently underway)

Further information on the programme can be found on the [Yorkshire and the Humber Public Health Network website](#).

Programme spotlights: Mapping Review and Training Needs Assessment

Mapping review: Gambling support and information resources (April 2023)

As part of the communication and engagement section of the programme, a web-based mapping review took place to identify best practice resources in gambling harms resources and information. This was due to variations in the quality of framing and messaging on the risk of harms. The review took place in November 2022, with additional sources included up to and including to February 2023. Criteria was used to analyse sources such as understanding the intended audience and accessibility.

In total, **79 web-based sources** were identified and included in this review with 78 of those resources targeted specifically for people who gamble.

Based on the findings, five recommendation areas were suggested:

- **Language;** consistent use of 'gambling-related harm' and inclusive language (i.e. non prescriptive of gender), avoidant of individual responsibility narratives with a balanced view of risk.
- **Accessibility;** use of best practice accessibility features (e.g. translation functions) including images, video or audio alongside text. Figure 1 (below) shows an example of positive and inappropriate imagery included in the findings.
- **Referencing;** use of evidence-based national and local statistics on gambling harm, being mindful of sources used— is there gambling industry involvement?
- **Signposting;** offer support and information to different groups (people who gamble, Affected Others), including a variety of options. E.g. face to face meetings and virtual options
- **Feedback;** gain feedback on gambling support information and resources from a range of perspectives in various ways, being clear in the ask when doing so. E.g. are you asking for feedback based on messaging? Or whether information is presented clearly and accessible.

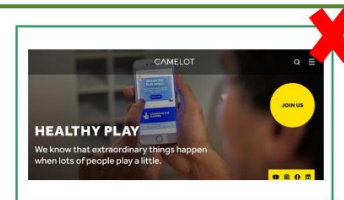


Figure 5: An example of inappropriate imagery used by the National Lottery.

(Source: Healthy Play, Camelot Group)

In comparison, Beacon Counselling Trust (right) uses a more supportive image reaching out for help which is more appropriate as a visual image of support.



Figure 6: Positive appropriate imagery can show visual signs of support in resources.

(Source: Beacon Counselling Trust)

Figure 1: Positive and negative imagery use

You can find the full report [here](#).

Training Needs Assessment (June 2023)

To appropriately develop a gambling harms training package for the region, a training needs survey was conducted to identify gaps in knowledge of gambling harms by professionals.

The survey was conducted in April 2023 with **111 responses** received across the region. Some key themes and conclusions overall were:

- Individuals indicated **mixed levels of understanding about the relevance of gambling-related harms to their role**, but identified greater relevance to their wider organisation. This suggests greater work is needed to increase clarity and understanding to individual roles.
- **6%** of respondents identified as feeling 'confident' discussing gambling-related harms.
- **76%** of survey respondents had not previously completed gambling harms training (show in Figure 2). When asked, 81% of respondents stated the main reason was that training had not been offered to them.

The results have been used to shape the development of a regional gambling harms training package that is gambling industry independent and non-stigmatising. They have also been shared with national OHID leads for ongoing gambling harms work.

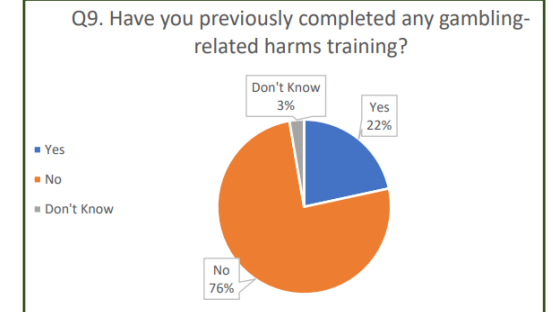


Figure 2: Survey results on completion of gambling harms training

Facilitating a regional public health programme: Lessons learned so far

- Lived experience stories are powerful in their value and empower people to drive for change
- Mixed levels of understanding of how gambling has evolved over time and how powerful the gambling industry is and the influence it has on perceptions around gambling. It is a continuous learning curve!
- Public health has a vital role in building evidence and advocating for change even in challenging circumstances.

References:

[Gov.uk: Gambling-related harms evidence review: summary \(January 2023\)](#)
[YH GRH Mapping Review Recommendations April 2023](#)
[Y& Training Needs Assessment Survey Results- June 2023](#)