Three Horizons of Gambling Harm - second draft November 2020

Pattern

Present Concerns - Horizon 1

Lack of awareness of the problem

- Challenges around raising awareness
- Individuals affected do not see their need for support
- A lack of knowledge about gambling harm and the public health approach
- Individuals do not know how to access support
- Stigma as significant barrier to seeking support and treatment
- Lack of awareness from those delivering help, support and treatment. E.g. low knowledge of pathways available among GP, debt advisors, social workers, mental health services, etc.
- Gambling related harms is a hidden addiction

Lack of treatment and support

- Lack of recovery/rehabs in Scotland
- People know how to gamble, but how to get help is more difficult
- Hard to get overview of what's available to support people.
- Need for after-care support for people with lived experience
- Better support in place for alcohol and drugs, but not for gambling.
- Gaps in coverage and support - in rural areas, for families etc
- Services are hidden - Gamblers Anonymous do not advertise. No big leaflets in GP surgeries etc
- Little tailored support in third sector agencies
- Lack of funding for psychological support (eg CBT) from local health authorities

Fragmented support

- People affected by gambling harms being sent from pillar to post between services

Gambling is a hidden problem

- The problem is hidden - "this is solo, silent, taking you from the inside"
- Gamblers hide the problem from themselves, let alone the authorities - yet they want to get caught (to receive help)

Psychological warfare with unequal forces

- Online product designed for addiction
- Highly addictive products available at home through online gambling – easy to access
- The industry impact on the individual
- FOBT - Availability in pubs, service stations and arcades
- Psychological warfare: the industry is adept at exploiting the risk-reward mechanism. Unequal forces in play
- Structural and class issues: eg see the gambling infrastructure in Coatbridge vs Milngavie
- Easy access to gambling online - 'it's a massacre'
- Gamblers feel small and relatively powerless in face of industry forces
- Majority of high street bookmakers close to cashpoint machines

NHS blindspot

- NHS lack of knowledge and awareness: GPs don't notice, don't ask, don't know how to respond
- Lack of interest in the NHS: gambling harm does not show up on their books

Tough problem to crack

- Overwhelmed by the profound harm and the complexity of the problem
- Slow pace of change

Particular groups at risk

- Young men with disposable income or in predominantly male workplaces
- People experiencing boredom and/or isolation
- Women – targeted by gambling adverts (online bingo and games especially)
- People experiencing financial hardship
- People experiencing mental health conditions such as Bipolar Disorder
- People with addictive personalities

Gambling Act (2005)

- Urgent need to overhaul the Gambling Act (2005)

Gambling in gaming

- Looking at different age groups and how we should meaningfully communicate with them

Advertising

- Dual accountability for the gambler and the company – dump the 'responsible gambling' slogan
- As with cigarette packaging advertising, information on harms should be available at all places of gambling
- Normalisation of gambling - importance of de-glamorising gambling

Deep causes

- High rates of trauma and addiction can mean gambling is a form of escapism
- Gambling is recognised as a cause and consequence of adverse childhood experiences

Innovation - Horizon 2

Education and support for young people

- Age appropriate education on gambling harm to be delivered in schools
- Should be included in curriculum in Scotland, as in England
- Educational initiatives to be delivered by people with lived experience
- Build evidence base on what works in educational initiatives.
- Think of the wider educational system – how are we engaging with parents, teachers and youth workers?
- Training and support for educators and schools.
- Engaging with young people on this topic
- Opportunity to use the forum's lived experience to engage with young people online
- Engage more young people in peer support and mutual help

Stronger regulation

- Stronger repercussions for gambling industry – e.g. losing licence rather than just fines
- Proper obligations on companies for safeguarding and prevention
- Stricter checks when people open gambling accounts
- Work with banks and financial institutions to increase support for people at risk of gambling harm
- Governance – need to review the oversight of the Gambling Commission, e.g. a financial ombudsman

Provide spaces for talking and listening

- Need to be able to tell our stories - need more widespread awareness so there are stories to fit

Raise awareness of harm

- Create hard hitting messages to increase people's awareness of the risks.
- Linking the activity to the nasty consequences
- Gather more evidence eg through surveying school children, teenagers, young people
- Knowledge is power - gather more data and information

Improve NHS services

- Establish a Scottish Gambling Clinic - following Matt Gaskell
- Toolkit for GPs - to raise awareness and provide ways to respond
- Getting GPs and primary care more aware of this problem

Understand the problem better

- Understanding: this is structural and systemic, not only down to the individual
- Prevention is better than cure.
- Understand gambling as an addiction like tobacco or alcohol

Better access to support

- Establish a comprehensive directory of resources to help
- Online support more accessible during Covid

Funding and investment

- Ring-fenced statutory levy to fund research, education and treatment. Not just voluntary levy
- We need much greater investment to make 'what works' more widely available in Scotland

Grow momentum for change

- Appetite for change in Parliament
- Increasing media attention helps to grow awareness
- Getting policy makers to the table

Removing stigma

- Removing Stigma slowly but surely through awareness and allowing voices to be heard (eg the Alliance role)
- Awareness Public Health, Education.

People with lived experience help to develop policy and action

- People with lived experience closely involved in the development and implementation of policy, setting the research agenda on gambling harms, developing preventative campaigns and initiatives

Banks involved

- Banks getting involved in gambling blocks
- Tighter controls on cash transfers from credit cards to current accounts
- More stringent credit checks for new loans

Ideal System - Horizon 3

Effective management of the problem

- Curbs on advertising gambling in all spheres, tv, online, etc.
- Most 'dangerous' products are effectively regulated to reduce harm.
- Gambling treated like tobacco is today
- Education and prevention are working - young people are not tempted to gamble

Person-centred public health approach

- Access to appropriate holistic support and treatment – addiction, mental health, relationship counselling, support for affected others, financial advice.
- Public health led approach with NHS and wider community involvement
- A whole person, trauma informed approach to meeting the needs of people who have experienced gambling harms in all settings

Wider system - including NHS - is aware, well informed, competent to respond

- NHS takes gambling harm seriously - effective services for those who are suffering
- Key professional groups, e.g Link Workers, social worker, mental health professionals know the system and know where support is available.

Heightened knowledge of gambling harms

- Greater awareness from community and services, means people can access support quicker and be treated earlier.

Hope and Encouragement

People

- Matt Gaskell consultant psychologist, NHS Northern Gambling Service
- Spaces to talk about the severity of the issue and impact on friends and family
- Gamblers Anonymous - fellowship and understanding
- The ALLIANCE and the Lived Experience Forum
- The Gambling Therapy Line
- Spaces to be listened to with respect
- Role models - people who have turned things around
- People with knowledge taking the problem seriously (no trite answers)
- People taking an interest - in me as an individual

Services

- Smart Recovery Course - Falkirk
- Gamcare Scotland - access to diverse resources
- Netherlands used to have a magazine addressing gambling harm - published by the casino
- Gordon Moody Association

Society

- Public acknowledgement: this is a problem, people are affected, and you may not even know you are affected

This map uses a **'Three Horizons' framework** to record highlights from a series of conversations with people with lived experience of gambling harms. Three Horizons is a framework for understanding the landscape of change. It shows how the existing 'First Horizon' (H1) system that is not working well slowly gives way to a new 'Third Horizon' (H3) system in the future, through the innovations and changes introduced in the 'Second Horizon' (H2). This framework is used by policymakers to develop a roadmap to plot a course towards a different and better future. This map shows concerns with the present system, elements of an ideal system we would like to see in the future, promising innovations that might help make the difference to shift things from where we are now to where we would like to be, and - crucially - places where that new system is already showing up in the present, providing hope and encouragement that the desired future pattern is indeed possible.

Time