



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport

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9 January 2023

Mr Alexander Källman
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Our Ref:
MC2022/15816/PW

Dear Alexander,

Thank you for your correspondence of 30 November on behalf of Tackling Gambling Stigma, regarding gambling harm.

I am glad to hear about the important work you are doing to tackle gambling-related stigma. I welcome your work and already know from experience the impact hearing first-hand stories of those with lived experience has.

I would like to thank you in particular for your insight about the stigma and discrimination related to gambling harm. It is a priority that we make sure harm is prevented as early on as possible and that those who are experiencing difficulties can access the right support at the right time. Gambling harm is a public health issue which is why the regulatory framework puts in protections for the population as a whole, as well as tailored protections for those suffering from harm and treatment services for those who need it.

I also want to assure you that the government is committed to ensuring the right protections are in place and that people experiencing gambling-related harm have the support they need. To improve and expand treatment provision across England, the NHS has committed to opening up to 15 specialist problem gambling clinics by 2023/24. Eight are already in operation and more will follow soon. This operates alongside third sector provision, including services like the 24/7 helpline commissioned by GambleAware and operated by Gamcare, and specialist residential support such as that provided by Gordon Moody, including the country's first residential gambling treatment centre for women. The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) as the lead department for treatment and public health is working alongside the NHS and third sector to ensure that services are joined up.

There are also a range of initiatives in place to raise awareness of the risks of harmful gambling. The Gambling Commission already requires all gambling operators to make information available on safer gambling and how to access information on problem gambling. Most operators signpost to GambleAware's website which offers a range of support options, and the NHS webpage 'Help for problem gambling' covers common indicators which suggest that individuals may be experiencing harmful gambling, as well as advice and links to treatment services. Ensuring that the right safer gambling information and messaging is available to the public is also in scope of the Gambling Act Review. I agree with you that getting the language right is so important here and we are considering the evidence closely regarding what messaging works and for which audiences.



There are also efforts to build capability in the healthcare workforce. DHSC has committed to undertake an audit of gambling-related harm training materials for healthcare professionals, and the NHS Live Well page on gambling has been updated, providing information on gambling-related harms and signposting to sources of support. Work is also being done to raise awareness through frontline practitioners, with GambleAware publishing a competency framework for primary care practitioners to improve the awareness and responsiveness of - primary care to gambling harms.

I want to reassure you that the Department is committed to the Gambling Act Review and we expect to publish the white paper in the coming weeks. We are carefully considering all evidence received and the impacts of our proposals in every area, including the funding system for research, education and treatment services and the most effective model for safer gambling messaging.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Paul Scully', written in a cursive style.

Paul Scully MP
Minister for Tech and the Digital Economy