# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Tackling gambling-related harm in Wales** |
| **DATE**  | **13 January 2020** |
| **BY** | **Vaughan Gething AM, Minister for Health and Social Services** |

Members will be aware of the announcement by five large gambling operators, made last year, to increase their voluntary research, education and treatment donations to an additional £100m over the next five years. A Committee chaired by Lord Chadlington was established to make recommendations on how these additional monies should be deployed. The Committee published their report in December with the key recommendation being the establishment of a new independent grant giving charity, ‘Action Against Gambling Harms’. We expect this Charity to be fully operational by the end of the year and are keen to ensure that the industry’s commitment to work with Government including the devolved administrations and other relevant parties on the direction of their additional funding is met.

In the meantime, in Wales we continue to take an integrated and collaborative approach to problem gambling policy development, in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and as recommended in the joint report by Public Health Wales and Bangor University 'Gambling as a public health issue in Wales'[[1]](#footnote-1). We continue to support delivery partners to raise awareness of their treatment services and awareness programmes as they expand their service provision in Wales. Within two health boards, we are piloting an approach that explores how people with gambling problems could be supported in NHS services. We are also exploring how we can increase awareness of gambling harms and relevant support services through sports clubs in Wales and through the provision of gambling awareness training to our Armed Forces Liaison Officers. I am also pleased to announce that I have recently approved £25,000 of funding via Health and Care Research Wales to Swansea University for the setting up of a network to support the development of gambling research in Wales.

This collaborative approach is being further supported by specific actions on problem gambling that have been included in the Substance Misuse Delivery Plan 2019-2022[[2]](#footnote-2). These actions seek to improve the links between substance misuse teams and existing gambling treatment services in Wales, as well as to investigate the links between certain risk behaviours through a review of the literature. This will help to inform future action across policy areas as we progress the ambitions within a Healthier Wales[[3]](#footnote-3) for a seamless, whole-system approach to health services.

1. Gambling as a public health issue in Wales. Robert D. Rogers, Heather Wardle, Catherine A. Sharp, Sara Wood, Karen Hughes, Timothy J. Davies, Simon Dymond & Mark A. Bellis. 2019 Public Health Wales NHS Trust, Bangor University. <https://www.bangor.ac.uk/psychology/research/gambling/gambling-and-health-in-wales> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Substance misuse delivery plan 2019-2022. 2019 Welsh Government. <https://gov.wales/substance-misuse-delivery-plan-2019-2022-0> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A Healthier Wales: our plan for health and social care. 2018 Welsh Government. <https://gov.wales/healthier-wales-long-term-plan-health-and-social-care> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)