

## ANNOUNCEMENT

**GambleAware has launched the second phase of the public health campaign 'Bet Regret': a preventative message to sports bettors aiming to embed Tap Out behaviour to avoid Bet Regret**

- The latest Bet Regret public health campaign introduces a new behaviour change technique which encourages people to pause and reconsider before they place a bet they may regret.
- This announcement sets out in more detail the campaign objective and target audience: an evidence-based, preventative message to young male sports bettors encouraging them to Tap Out of gambling apps to reduce impulsive betting and prevent gambling harm.
- In development since late 2019, the premise of the campaign is based on evidence which suggests that introducing a short pause when gambling may help improve decision making and reduce loss chasing behaviour.
- The campaign is targeted at the 2.4m men in Britain who bet frequently on sport and aims to embed Tap Out behaviour, adding friction to a frictionless activity, facilitating the development of self-control, and ultimately helping prevent the onset of gambling addiction.
- User testing with the campaign target audience has demonstrated that Tap Out behaviour can be easily adopted, can be adhered to over time, and can help gamblers to reduce the number of bets that they instantly regret.
- This campaign runs parallel to promotion of the National Gambling Treatment Service to those who may need support and treatment, but importantly is targeted to promote a preventative message to regular gamblers rather than promoting a solution for when addiction has already taken control.

**London, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2020:** This weekend GambleAware launched the second phase of Great Britain's largest national safer gambling campaign, Bet Regret, which is targeted at an estimated audience of 2.4m men aged 18-34 who gamble frequently on sport. The first advert of the 2020 campaign premiered on Saturday 12th September during the kick-off match of the Premier League – Fulham v Arsenal. The campaign consists of two TV adverts alongside a radio and digital campaign. Drawing on the nostalgia and popularity of wrestling, the TV adverts dramatize the concept of 'tapping-out for time out' to encourage sports bettors to pause before making an impulsive bet.

Overseen by the Safer Gambling Campaign Board<sup>1</sup> chaired by Professor Sian Griffiths OBE, the campaign builds on the first phase of the Bet Regret campaign, which tapped into the instant feeling of regret bettors often

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<sup>1</sup> GambleAware established the Safer Gambling Campaign Board, which is made up of representatives from Public Health England, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, the London South Bank University Centre for Addictive Behaviours Research and GambleAware itself, after being invited by the Minister responsible for gambling policy to design and deliver a campaign, based on best practice in public health education. The Board has overseen the

cite when they've placed bets they know they shouldn't, often when drunk, bored or chasing losses. The first phase of the Bet Regret campaign provoked self-appraisal and self-reflection with the aim of reducing the frequency of impulsive bets, thus avoiding behaviours that could be pathways towards disordered gambling. Tracking data has shown that brand recognition for the Bet Regret message remains high amongst its target audience, driven in part by the social media content featuring ex-England goalkeeper David James promoted during the 2019/20 football season.

This second phase of the campaign aims to build on this success and to introduce a behaviour change technique to nudge bettors to pause and reconsider before making a bet, thereby avoiding making risky and impulsive bets, leading to fewer incidents of impulsive betting and fewer 'Bet Regret' moments. By Tapping Out of a betting app, bettors are adding friction to what would otherwise be a frictionless activity.

The campaign message 'Tap Out to avoid Bet Regret' is grounded in the evidence. Research has shown that amongst gamblers who are not currently experiencing gambling disorder, taking a short pause while gambling can improve decision making, reduce loss chasing and reduce the amount of money spent<sup>2,3</sup>. However, there is a gap in the evidence internationally in demonstrating how this knowledge can be translated into effective intervention, which this campaign aims to fill. In developing the approach, closing the app was a behavioural technique which the campaign audience with whom it was tested felt they were likely to adopt. Closing the app was preferred to other behaviours as it encouraged participants to place less risky bets, to think twice about whether to place a bet, and overall made them place less of the bets that they regret the moment they've made them. 93% of those participating said they were likely to carry on using the technique.

It is important to recognise that the Bet Regret campaign does not operate in a vacuum. In parallel, GambleAware run a campaign targeted at those experiencing gambling harms to promote the National Gambling Treatment Service<sup>4</sup> which is an essential campaign for those who need access to treatment and support tailored to their needs. However, it is universally agreed that prevention is better than cure, and that is why the campaign audience of regular gamblers cannot be ignored, despite them not currently experiencing gambling addiction. We want to encourage long-term behaviour change to keep people safe from gambling harms, and by encouraging high-risk groups such as young male sports bettors to adopt Tap Out behaviour we seek to prevent future harm.

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campaign throughout its development. More information about Board members and advisors can be found here: <https://about.gambleaware.org/prevention/safer-gambling-campaign/>.

<sup>2</sup> [Corr, P. J., & Thompson, S. J. \(2014\)](#). Pause for thought: Response perseveration and personality in gambling. *Journal of Gambling Studies*, 30(4), 889-900.

<sup>3</sup> [Parke, J., Parke, A. and Blaszczynski, A. \(2016\)](#) Product-Based Harm Minimisation. Responsible Gambling Trust

<sup>4</sup> NGTS campaign: <https://about.gambleaware.org/national-gambling-treatment-service/national-gambling-treatment-service-campaign/>

GambleAware will continue to track the impact of the Bet Regret campaign, monitoring campaign awareness and response, its impact on attitudes, conversations around betting, consideration of moderation, and betting behaviours. This research, conducted by Ipsos Mori, will be supplemented by indicators such as visits to the BeGambleAware.org website for information on moderation, uptake of moderation or exclusion tools and market data on betting behaviours.

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**About GambleAware**

- GambleAware is an independent charity (Charity No. England & Wales 1093910, Scotland SC049433) that champions a public health approach to preventing gambling harms – see <http://about.gambleaware.org/>
- GambleAware is a commissioner of integrated prevention, education and treatment services on a national scale, with over £40 million of grant funding under active management. In partnership with gambling treatment providers, GambleAware has spent several years methodically building structures for commissioning a coherent system of brief intervention and treatment services, with clearly defined care pathways and established referral routes to and from the NHS – a National Gambling Treatment Service.
- The National Gambling Treatment Service brings together a National Gambling Helpline and a network of locally-based providers across Great Britain that works with partner agencies and people with lived experience to design and deliver a system, which meets the needs of individuals. This system delivers a range of treatment services, including brief intervention, counselling (delivered either face-to-face or online), residential programmes and psychiatrist led care.
- In the 12 months to 31 March 2019, provisional figures show that the National Gambling Treatment Service treated 10,000 people and this is projected to rise to 24,000 people a year by 2021. Helpline activity is currently running at about 30,000 calls and on-line chats per annum. GambleAware also runs the website BeGambleAware.org which helps 4.2 million visitors a year and signposts to a wide range of support services.
- GambleAware produces public health campaigns including Bet Regret. A Safer Gambling Board, including representatives from Public Health England, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and GambleAware, is responsible for the design and delivery of a campaign based on best practice in public health education. The Bet Regret campaign is being funded through specific,

additional donations to the charity, in line with a commitment given to the government by the broadcasting, advertising and gambling industries. See <https://about.gambleaware.org/prevention/safer-gambling-campaign/>.

- This campaign focuses on prevention in the group of 2.4m young men known to be active gamblers. It runs in parallel with other campaigns which promote the National Gambling Treatment Service ([www.begambleaware.org/ngts](http://www.begambleaware.org/ngts)) to those who may need advice, support and treatment. As part of the suite of media activity we engage in, it is targeted to promote a preventative message to regular gamblers rather than promoting a solution for when addiction has already taken control.