



**Information for service users,
carers and the public**

**SUPPORTING
YOUR RECOVERY**

Search online: **“NHS Northern Gambling Service”**

We're here to provide specialist treatment for people with a gambling addiction, as well as stand-alone support to people affected by gambling addiction, such as a family member or partner.

We also specialise in providing support and treatment to those whose gambling addiction co-insides with mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, trauma, and suicidal feelings.

We cover the whole of the North of England. Details about how you can access this service and other forms of help can be found on the back page.

Who are we?

We're a clinical team made up of psychologists, therapists, mental health nurses and psychiatrists. We are based in Leeds, Manchester, and Sunderland. You will also have access to people with lived experience of gambling addiction, who are now in recovery.

What to expect from us

Anyone approaching us for help can expect to be met with understanding, compassion, and a determination to make life better as quickly as possible.

Once we accept your referral, you can expect to be seen as soon as a mutually agreeable appointment can be made. If we are not the right service for you this will be explained to you, and an alternative pathway of support recommended.

We'll start the process with an assessment of your current situation, the challenges you're facing and how this is affecting you. We'll use this information and work with you to come up with a personalised care plan.

If you feel in two minds about changing your gambling we can still explore this, and give you an opportunity to reflect on where you are and where you'd like to be, without judgement or pushing you into anything.

Treatment

If appropriate a next step is a meeting with those close to you so that everyone understands the recovery process and the support you'll need along the way. Recovery tends to work well when we have support.

We'll also discuss methods to stop opportunities to gamble, including the use of technology and changes to banking and looking after money at this point. If loved ones need their own support from us then this can also be organised at this point.

We'll then begin our core treatment which is eight to ten sessions of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT) for gambling addiction, usually in a group setting. A group format means that members can learn together and inspire each other. CBT is a talking therapy that can help you sustain change by changing the way you think, feel, and behave. You will also learn new coping skills. You'll get a range of resources to help navigate you through the programme.

Following this programme a therapist will meet with you and your family again to agree a relapse prevention plan. Here we continue the process of connecting you with a more meaningful life, through building what we call 'recovery capital'. Recovery capital is a mixture of positive things in your life that can help you build and sustain a lifestyle characterised by abstinence from gambling, personal health, quality of life, social connectedness, and citizenship. This can take various forms depending on the kind of support required.

Throughout the journey you can connect with other people who've shared the same experiences and recovered well. We call this peer support. A graduate group can also be accessed following completion of the core programme, as well as periodic sessions with your therapist. This is so you can remain vigilant, check in on any ongoing challenges, receive support, and link in with other graduates, staff, and peer support. Mutual Aid groups will also be offered. These choices will be discussed with you.

While the information above describes our core therapeutic service offer, the team takes a holistic approach and will ensure that any other difficulties such as distress, debt problems, alcohol/drug abuse, and mental health problems that you're experiencing alongside your gambling addiction are also attended to. Often treating the gambling problem improves other issues, but sometimes there are problems that require intervention before, during or afterwards. We will involve other services where necessary with your consent.

How and where can I access services?

Generally people will attend our clinics either in Leeds, Sunderland or Manchester. However we recognise this will not always be possible.

We can also use video conferencing technology (a bit like Skype or FaceTime) or arrange to see people at a more convenient location wherever possible.

Referrals and contacting the service

The NHS Northern Gambling Service works closely with a range of people and organisations including GPs, local councils, NHS Trusts, national and local charities, Citizens' Advice Bureaus, the criminal justice system, debt agencies, substance misuse services, GamCare, and homeless agencies.

One of our core values is that "any door is the right door" which means people can be referred in via a number of routes no matter where they are or who they are receiving help from.

The easiest way to be referred directly to us are as follows:

Tel: **0300 300 1490**

Email: **referral.ngs@nhs.net**

Find out more about us at:



Alternatively you can contact the national helpline (see details below), speak to a GP, or have a service you are with refer in on your behalf.

Other sources of help

Here are a few other places you can turn to.

National helpline

You can contact the National Gambling Helpline operated by GamCare on **0808 8020 133** or visit **www.gamcare.org.uk**

Gamblers Anonymous

You can find a local Gamblers Anonymous meeting at: **www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk**

NHS website

Other forms of help and advice are listed on the national NHS website at: **www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/gambling-addiction.**

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