



# GREAT

NETWORK WALES

GAMBLING RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND TREATMENT



Ymchwil Iechyd  
a Gofal Cymru  
Health and Care  
Research Wales



Ariennir gan  
Lywodraeth Cymru  
Funded by  
Welsh Government

## 2020 - 2021 Annual report





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## About the Network

Hosted at Swansea University, the GREAT Network Wales exists to drive research, education and treatment for all forms of gambling-related harm in individuals, families and communities.

Gambling is an increasingly popular recreational activity, but for a significant and growing proportion of the population, it can spiral into addiction and lead to several forms of related harm.

As a network for researchers, service providers, people with lived experience and policymakers, GREAT develops effective treatments for problematic or excessive gambling, educational and consultancy services for all sectors, produces high-quality, peer-reviewed impartial research, and serves as a clearinghouse for scientific evidence about gambling and its related harms.



## Our aims

- To build the evidence base for better understanding the nature and extent of gambling-related harm in Wales
- To develop and evaluate ways of preventing and reducing gambling-related harm
- To develop effective treatments for problematic or excessive gambling
- To inform policy-based gambling research
- To provide educational and consultancy services aimed at raising awareness of gambling-related harm
- To strengthen and consolidate gambling research capacity, capability and long-term viability in Wales.

## Who's who

Network Director

**Professor Simon Dymond**

Swansea University

Research Coordinator

**Susannah Field**

Swansea University

Management Team

**Professor Henrietta Bowden-Jones OBE**

National Problem Gambling Clinic

**Dr Alice Hoon**

Swansea University

**Professor Bev John**

**Professor Gareth Roderique-Davies**

University of South Wales

### Contact GREAT

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# Highlights 2020 - 2021

Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic during its inaugural year, members of the GREAT Network have played a central role in several significant developments to the gambling environment in Wales.

## **Call for gambling disorder clinics in Wales**

In October 2020, members of the GREAT Network Wales published a letter in world-leading medical journal *The Lancet*, calling for NHS gambling disorder treatment clinics to be established in Wales in response to the serious impact of problem gambling, particularly amongst younger people. The letter highlighted significant inequalities in treatment provision between UK nations.

## **Establishment of NHS provision for gambling related harm**

Members of the GREAT Network are working with the Public Health Division of the Welsh Government to develop the first nationwide NHS services for the treatment of gambling related harms in Wales. Research will be embedded into the new services, increasing research capacity in Wales, building our understanding of the relative effectiveness of support options for different groups within the Welsh population, and enabling continual improvement in care and treatment.

## **Submission of evidence to the Review of the Gambling Act 2005**

As a founder member of the Academics Forum for the Study of Gambling, Professor Dymond responded to the UK Government's recent call for evidence to the Review of the Gambling Act 2005. The Act underpins virtually all regulation of gambling in Great Britain but is significantly out of step with the huge developments to the gambling sector over the last 15 years, as well as our increased understanding of factors such as certain groups' increased vulnerability to gambling related harms.

*Continued*

## UK Armed Forces Veterans' Health and Gambling Study

Professor Dymond led this first evaluation of gambling-related problems among UK veterans, funded by the Forces in Mind Trust. Anecdotal evidence suggested an increased risk of vulnerable individuals developing a gambling addiction, but the nature of any problem in the UK was unknown.



This research examined the true scale of gambling behaviour among UK veterans in comparison to non-veterans, as well as the relationships between gambling-related problems and length of active service, alcohol use and trauma. The final report was submitted in May 2021 and will inform both support interventions for those transitioning to civilian life, and factors that should be included in future health surveys of the UK population.

## Where next?

In 2021- 2022, we aim to:

- Continue to expand membership and reach of the GREAT Network Wales
- Bring further funding for gambling-related research into Wales, building our evidence base
- Secure support from the Gambling Commission to build gambling research capacity in Wales
- Establish GREAT as a Centre of Excellence for research within Swansea University

**Want to find out more?** Contact the GREAT Network Wales

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