

Call for evidence: health impacts of gambling in London

October 2023

The London Assembly Health Committee has launched an investigation into the health impacts of gambling in London. The investigation will seek to understand the extent of gambling harm in London, how a person's health may be negatively impacted by a problematic relationship to gambling, what support services are available to people suffering harms from gambling in London and what the Mayor of London is doing to reduce the harms caused by gambling.

The Committee would like to invite those who have experience or knowledge of the health impacts of gambling in London to provide written evidence to the Committee. The information you provide will help to inform the work of the Committee and influence its recommendations.

Background

The Gambling Commission has estimated that 0.3 per cent of the population may be engaged in harmful gambling and that younger people are more likely to experience harms from gambling.¹

The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID) suggests harmful gambling is linked to higher rates of suicide, depression, alcohol

dependence and drug use. It has estimated the cost of gambling-related health harms in England as £754.4 - £1,475 million per year.²

In 2022-23, NHS England said that 1,389 patients in England were referred to the NHS for gambling support, which is up from 775 two years previously. In July 2023, it announced that seven new gambling clinics would open in 2023, on top of the eight clinics already in operation, including one in London. The NHS plans to treat up to 3,000 patients a year across the 15 clinics.³

How to respond

The Committee welcomes any evidence relevant to the following questions:

1. How has participation in land-based (in-person) and online gambling in London changed in recent years, and what is the prevalence of people experiencing gambling-related harms in London?
2. How can a problematic relationship to gambling affect someone's health?

¹ Problem gambling means gambling to a degree that compromises, disrupts, or damages family, personal, or recreational pursuits – Gambling Commission, [Problem gambling](#).

² Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, [Gambling-related harms evidence review: summary](#), 11 January 2023

³ NHS England, [NHS doubles gambling clinics as referrals soar](#), 2 July 2023

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3. Who in London is most likely to experience gambling-related health harms and how are people impacted differently by problematic gambling?
4. Does the NHS offer sufficient support for people in London experiencing gambling related health harms?
5. What other support services in London are available to people experiencing gambling related health harms and is this sufficient?
6. What could the Mayor do to help reduce the harms caused by gambling and improve support to those affected by gambling-related health harms?
7. Is there anything else you wish to share with the Committee that can help inform our investigation?

Written submissions should be sent to scrutiny@london.gov.uk with 'Health Committee call for evidence' as the subject line. The deadline is **Wednesday 29 November 2023**. You do not need to answer all questions - please answer only those that are most relevant to you or your organisation.

The Committee is keen to hear from any relevant London-based private, statutory or voluntary sector organisation or individual working to

reduce the health harms caused by gambling or supporting people who have experienced gambling-related harms in London.

What we will do with the responses

The results will be used to inform the London Assembly Health Committee's investigation. Responses may be used to form part of a report or output from the Committee.

In the large majority of circumstances we will publish written submissions and the name of the individual or organisation that submitted it online. This is so that there is transparency about what evidence the Committee has received. Exceptions to this are usually applied where there is a legal reason for non-publication or if there is a safeguarding or welfare issue. If there is a reason that you would like your evidence not to be published with your name (submitted anonymously) or not to be published at all (submitted confidentially), please let us know and the Committee will consider the request. However, this cannot be guaranteed, and the Assembly may be required to release non-personally identifiable information if requested under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

About the London Assembly Health Committee

The London Assembly consists of 25 elected London Assembly Members, who publicly examine the policies and programmes of the

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Mayor of London and relevant agencies through committee meetings, plenary sessions, site visits and investigations.

The Health Committee reviews health and wellbeing issues for Londoners, particularly public health issues. It also scrutinises the work of the Mayor on health issues, and in particular the actions arising from the Mayor's Health Inequalities Strategy. It routinely publishes the findings and recommendations of its investigations.

The members of the committee are:

- Dr Onkar Sahota AM (Chair)
- Caroline Russell AM (Deputy Chair)
- Emma Best AM
- Andrew Boff AM
- Krupesh Hirani AM.

Contact us

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