



Supporting a Trans or Non-Binary Person Affected by Gambling Harm

Understanding Gambling Harm Through a Gender-Diverse Lens



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Understanding Gambling Harm Through a Gender-Diverse Lens

Supporting someone affected by gambling harm can be challenging for any affected other. However, when the person you care about is trans or non-binary, there may be additional considerations that shape their experience of gambling harm and their access to support.

At Recover with Pride, we recognise that trans and non-binary people are not a homogenous group. Everyone's experiences, identities, relationships, and support needs are unique.

This guidance is not intended to make assumptions about trans and non-binary people. Instead, it aims to help affected others better understand some of the challenges that may exist and how they can offer compassionate, affirming support whilst also looking after their own wellbeing.



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Gambling Harm Can Affect Anyone

First and foremost, gambling harm can affect people of all genders, identities, and backgrounds.

Being trans or non-binary does not mean someone will experience gambling harm.

However, some trans and non-binary people face additional life pressures that can affect their wellbeing and increase vulnerability to harmful coping strategies.

These pressures can include:

- Experiences of discrimination.
- Social isolation.
- Family rejection.
- Housing insecurity.
- Poor mental wellbeing.
- Financial hardship.
- Harassment or abuse.
- Difficult experiences accessing services.

Understanding these factors can help affected others make sense of the wider context without excusing harmful behaviour.

Minority Stress and Emotional Wellbeing

Many trans and non-binary people experience what is known as minority stress.

This refers to the additional emotional burden created by:

- Discrimination.
- Prejudice.
- Fear of judgement.
- Pressure to conceal identity.
- Repeated challenges to their legitimacy or existence.

Living with these experiences over time can affect confidence, self-esteem, and mental wellbeing.

For some individuals, gambling may become one way of coping with stress, anxiety, loneliness, or difficult emotions.

Understanding this context can help affected others approach conversations with empathy and compassion.

Supporting the Person, Not Just the Gambling

When gambling harm is identified, it can be tempting to focus exclusively on the gambling behaviour.

However, recovery is often more effective when people are supported as whole individuals.

This means recognising:

- Their identity.
- Their lived experiences.
- Their support needs.
- Their strengths.
- Their challenges beyond gambling.

A person is not defined by their gambling harm, and they are not defined solely by their gender identity either.

The Importance of Affirming Language

One of the simplest and most powerful ways to support a trans or non-binary person is to respect their identity.

This includes:

- Using their correct name.
- Using their correct pronouns.
- Respecting how they describe themselves.
- Avoiding assumptions about gender.

Affirming language helps people feel seen, valued, and respected.

For many trans and non-binary people, this can make a significant difference in how safe they feel when discussing difficult topics.

Barriers to Seeking Support

Some trans and non-binary people may delay seeking help because of concerns about how they will be treated.

Common worries can include:

- Being misgendered.
- Experiencing discrimination.
- Having to educate professionals about gender identity.
- Fear of judgement.
- Lack of trans-inclusive support.

As an affected other, it can be helpful to recognise that these concerns may be genuine and based on previous experiences.

This does not mean support is unavailable.

It means choosing affirming and inclusive services can be particularly important.

If They Have Had Negative Experiences Before

You may hear things such as:

- "Support services don't understand me."
- "I've been treated badly before."
- "I don't want to explain my identity again."
- "People won't take me seriously."

It is important not to dismiss these concerns.

Instead, you might acknowledge them by saying:

- "I'm sorry that happened."
- "That sounds difficult."
- "You deserve to be treated with respect."
- "Let's see what LGBTQ+ affirming support is available."

Feeling heard can be an important first step.

Supporting Without Becoming Responsible

Affected others often feel responsible for solving everything.

You may find yourself:

- Researching support services.
- Managing appointments.
- Constantly checking in.
- Trying to prevent gambling.
- Carrying the emotional burden alone.

Whilst support is important, recovery still belongs to the individual.

Remember:

You can support someone without taking responsibility for their recovery.

You can care about someone without sacrificing your own wellbeing.

You can be compassionate whilst maintaining boundaries.

When Family Relationships Are Difficult

Some trans and non-binary people experience strained relationships with family members.

This may include:

- Rejection.
- Lack of acceptance.
- Limited contact.
- Ongoing conflict.

When gambling harm is present alongside these existing challenges, emotions can become particularly complex.

Affected others may feel they are supporting someone who has experienced considerable adversity, whilst also trying to navigate the consequences of gambling harm.

Both experiences can exist at the same time.

Chosen Family May Be Central

For many trans and non-binary people, chosen family relationships are incredibly important.

Support may come from:

- Friends.
- Community networks.
- Housemates.
- Former partners.
- LGBTQ+ peers.

If you are supporting someone in one of these roles, your experience is valid.

You do not need to be a biological relative to be significantly affected by gambling harm.

Looking After Yourself

When someone you care about is struggling, it can be easy to put your own needs aside.

Ask yourself:

- How is this affecting me?
- What support do I need?
- What boundaries might help?
- Am I carrying responsibilities that belong to someone else?

Supporting someone else should not come at the expense of your own wellbeing.

Your needs matter too.

Challenging Discrimination

If a trans or non-binary person experiences:

- Transphobia.
- Discrimination.
- Misgendering.
- Exclusion from services.

It is important to remember that this is not acceptable.

Everybody deserves access to support that is safe, respectful, and inclusive.

If concerns arise, it may be appropriate to:

- Raise concerns with the organisation.
- Use complaints procedures.
- Seek alternative support providers.
- Access LGBTQ+ specialist services.

Nobody should be expected to tolerate discrimination whilst seeking help.

Recovery and Hope

Recovery is possible for trans and non-binary people affected by gambling harm.

Like everyone else, recovery may involve:

- Honest conversations.
- Supportive relationships.
- Understanding triggers.
- Building healthier coping strategies.
- Rebuilding trust.
- Improving wellbeing.

The journey may not always be straightforward, but positive change is possible.

Affected others can play a valuable role by offering support, encouragement, and understanding whilst also maintaining healthy boundaries.

How Recover with Pride Can Help

At Recover with Pride, we understand the unique experiences that trans and non-binary people may face.

We provide an inclusive, affirming and non-judgemental space for both individuals affected by gambling harm and the people who support them.

We recognise that identity, wellbeing, relationships, and recovery are interconnected, and we are committed to creating spaces where people can feel safe, respected, and heard.



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Key Takeaway

Supporting a trans or non-binary person affected by gambling harm may involve understanding additional experiences such as discrimination, minority stress, barriers to support, and the importance of affirming relationships.

However, one principle remains the same:

You can offer compassion, understanding, and support without becoming responsible for somebody else's recovery.

Your wellbeing matters too, and support is available for both of you.

Key Message

Trans and non-binary people deserve support that is respectful, affirming, and inclusive. As an affected other, your support can make a difference, but your wellbeing is important too. You do not have to carry the impact of gambling harm alone.

Refer for support here:

www.switchboard.org.uk/service/recover-with-pride/referral/



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Support for Affected Others



Aila

Aila is a website for women in Scotland experiencing or affected by gambling harm, developed by women with lived and living experience. If you are being harmed by someone else's gambling, Aila brings together emotional support, financial and debt advice, and practical guidance on navigating conversations and setting boundaries, helping you find the right service at the right time. Our monthly Living Room offers a welcoming in-person and online space for women affected by their own or someone else's gambling, and the Lived and Living Library shares stories from women across Scotland. You are not alone.

Links

Website

aila-scotland.co.uk/explore-available-support/support-for-affected-others/

aila-scotland.co.uk/explore-available-support/are-you-supporting-someone-else/

aila-scotland.co.uk

Contact

hello@aila-scotland.co.uk



Ara

Ara provides free support for people across the South West affected by someone else's gambling, including partners, family members, friends and colleagues. Support includes one-to-one counselling delivered face-to-face, by telephone or online by professionally accredited, CBT-qualified counsellors. Sessions focus on emotional wellbeing, coping strategies, recovery and rebuilding confidence.

Ara also offers specialist relationship counselling support, where gambling has impacted trust, communication, finances or family life, helping people to rebuild relationships and move forward together. In addition, our easy access workshops provide practical advice, digital safety support, understanding gambling-related harms, and action planning for those seeking support at the earliest opportunity.

Links

Website

www.recovery4all.co.uk/

Refer for support here:

www.switchboard.org.uk/service/recover-with-pride/referral/



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Support for Affected Others



Betknowmore UK

Behind every person experiencing gambling harm, an estimated 6-10 other people may be affected.

A partner losing sleep. A parent caught between worry and responsibility. A young person living with tension in their home. A friend who wants to help but doesn't know how. A colleague covering up mistakes at work.

If this is you, Betknowmore UK is right behind you.

We offer digital peer support service for anyone aged 18 and above. Our Peer Supporters have City and Guilds assured training and lived experience of gambling harms. They understand what you are going through.

Supporting you through shared lived experience

As part of the statutory levy, Betknowmore UK is funded to provide 1:1 and group support to affected others in England and Scotland.

This support aims to ensure that through peer-led engagement and intervention, people are offered the most appropriate support to address their specific needs.

Links

Website

www.betknowmoreuk.org/affected-other

Breakeven

Breakeven

Breakeven offers counselling support for partners, family members and friends affected by someone else's gambling. Gambling harm can put pressure on relationships, finances and the wider household, and support is available for you too.

You can receive support even if the person who gambles is not ready to seek help. Breakeven works with affected family members and friends to help them understand their experiences and find ways to cope with the impact.

Its family and friends resources also offer guidance on looking after yourself, understanding gambling harms and having supportive, non-judgemental conversations.

Links

Website

www.breakeven.org.uk/family-and-friends

Refer for support here:

www.switchboard.org.uk/service/recover-with-pride/referral/



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Support for Affected Others



Chances

As part of Cyrenians' homelessness prevention strategy – Chances offers person-centred, non-judgemental, and non-time limited support to anyone aged 16+ in Scotland who is impacted by gambling harm. For affected others - the service adopts a Community Reinforcement & Family Training approach focused on their recovery and not the person gambling and supports with:

- Promoting self-care, general wellbeing, independence, and boundary setting
- Understanding gambling behaviour and a loved one's triggers
- Improving communication with the person gambling through positive reinforcement techniques
- Guidance & tools to encourage the person gambling to reduce the harms experienced

Online and phone options are offered Scotland wide and in-person in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Falkirk. Organisational and self-referrals are welcome via email or phone on **07983 137239**. Alternatively, a referral form can be completed (available upon request).

Links

Website

[Chances: Gambling Support](#)

Contact

[07983 137239](tel:07983137239)

chances@cyrenians.scot



Gambling Recovery Therapy

Founded by Lorraine Perrons and Claire Jones, Gambling Recovery for All CIC and Gambling Recovery Therapy Limited combine family experience of gambling harm with specialist professional training.

The CIC's Rebuild & Rise: Reclaim Your Life is a fully funded, trauma-informed 12-week online programme for eligible women across the UK affected by someone else's gambling. It focuses on emotional wellbeing, financial resilience, boundaries, confidence and rebuilding a sense of choice and control. Women can seek support whether or not the person who gambles has stopped or sought help.

Gambling Recovery Therapy Limited also offers private paid one-to-one therapy for people experiencing gambling harm and those affected by someone else's gambling, with a complimentary 30-minute introductory conversation.

Links

Website

www.gamblingrecoverytherapy.com/affected-other

forms.gle/aMA4fJbgDMSpg0Tb9

www.gamblingrecoverytherapy.com/brochure

Contact

contact@gamblingrecoverytherapy.com

Refer for support here:

www.switchboard.org.uk/service/recover-with-pride/referral/



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Support for Affected Others



Recover Together

Recover Together provides a safe and supportive space for people affected by gambling harm, including family members, partners, friends and others impacted by someone else's gambling. Reaching out can feel difficult, and people may not always know what support they need or where to start. We're here to listen and walk alongside them, helping them find a way forward that feels right for them. Our approach is shaped by lived experience of gambling harm and recovery, and we meet people with empathy, honesty and no judgement, providing support, understanding and connection.

Links

Website

recoverttogether.org/what-we-do/affected-others/



Shiltons' Silverlining

Shiltons' Silverlining supports partners, family members, friends and loved ones affected by someone else's gambling. Its Affected Others service offers a confidential space to talk, be heard and feel understood.

The charity recognises that someone else's gambling can bring anxiety, financial pressure, relationship difficulties and isolation. It offers emotional support, guidance and information to help people cope with the impact and find a way forward.

Built on lived experience, the service recognises that affected family members and friends need support for their own mental health, wellbeing and relationships too.

Links

Website

shiltonssilverlining.org/affected-others/

Refer for support here:

www.switchboard.org.uk/service/recover-with-pride/referral/



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