



Ara

Gambling Harms
Treatment in Wales

Introduction



Ara has have been providing services that tackle gambling harms in Wales for over a decade, and in 2019 became the National Gambling Treatment Provider for the whole of Wales. We established the first Welsh gambling treatment service with 4 partners – Penyrenhys Cardiff, 3Gs Merthyr, WCGADA Swansea and CAB Newport. Our Welsh treatment service is focussed on ensuring that in all of our interactions with clients, partner agencies, and other stakeholders, we promote local integration with the wider ecosystem of services for people throughout Wales.

Our approach within Wales is predicated on the understanding that a UK-wide or London-centric approach does not result in the best outcomes for culturally and linguistically diverse local communities. In addition to place-based interventions throughout Wales (with Welsh-language counselling and resources), we ensure that our employees and Lived Experience groups are



able to feed in to the design of the service, making it fit for a country where 35% of the population live in rural areas, away from the large urban conurbations where traditional services typically congregate. Our hybrid ways of working recognise that the transport infrastructure in Wales can preclude people engaging in treatment due to long journeys/little or no transport.

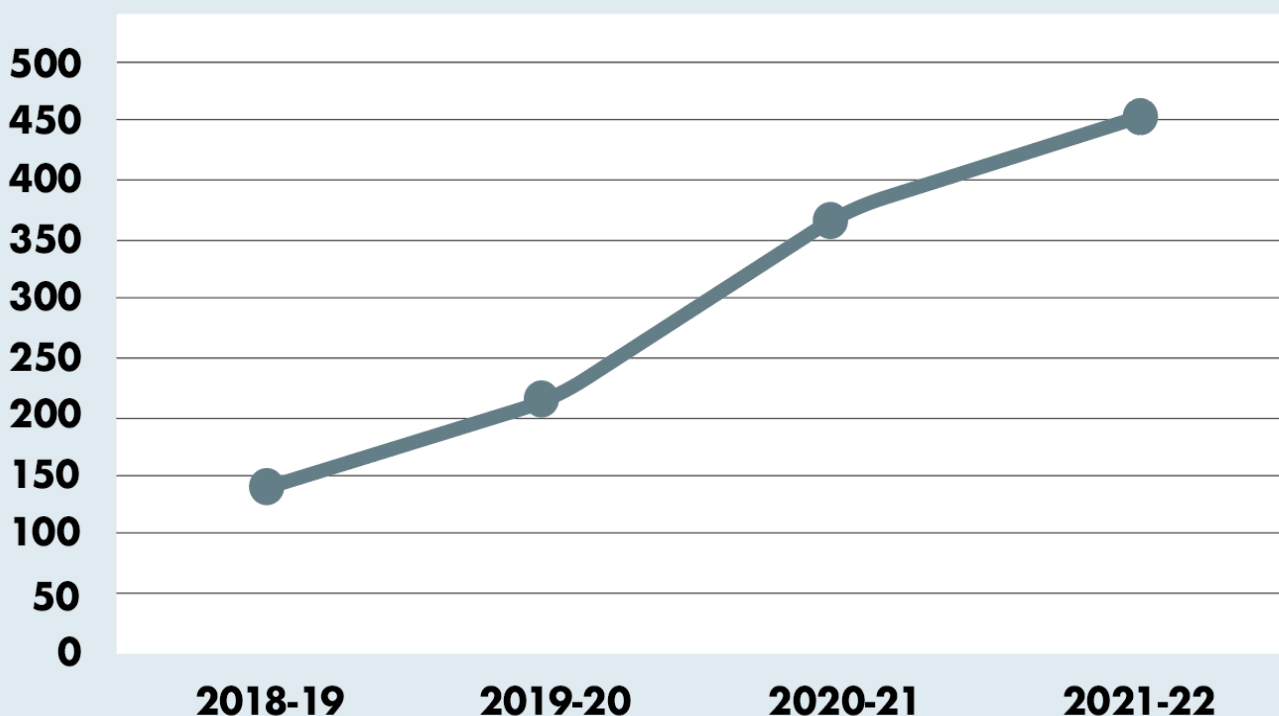
We know that gambling harms are not evenly distributed in Wales. People living in deprived areas are at increased risk (as with a range of health inequalities), and we focus our outreach work in line with research such as the Welsh Index of Multiple Deprivation, and the GambleAware Index of Multiple Deprivation Maps. Armed forces personnel and veterans; university students; South Asian communities; the homeless – these and other vulnerable groups within Wales form our priority for awareness raising and improving accessibility to free and confidential treatment.

Treatment & Support

In the financial year 2021-22, Ara directly supported 451 clients in Wales with structured counselling, self-exclusion tools, information, advice and guidance around gambling harms. This figure is up by 20% on the previous year:

Year	Welsh Gamblers & Affected Others Supported
2021-22	451
2020-21	374
2019-20	216
2018-19	138

Ara Wales Treatment Numbers





Treatment & Support

Client feedback showed that 100% of clients would recommend the service to someone else, and 98% were extremely or very satisfied with the service they received. Using industry standard screening tools, clients engaged with counselling showed an average 11 point improvement on their well-being scores and a 15 point improvement on their problem gambling scores (see Ara 2022 Impact Reports for details).

We have offices for treatment throughout Wales (including Cardiff, Carmarthen, Bridgend, Maesteg, Mountain Ash and Swansea) as well as telephone and video conference counselling available where this is a preferred option for clients. Welsh language advice and counselling is available across the nation, as well as Welsh and English options for gambling resources on our website.

Education & Prevention

Ara Young People's outreach programme is delivered across Wales to educate young people and professionals so that they can understand the risks related to gambling, build resilience, and know where to get help.

In the year 2021-22, our two Welsh Youth Outreach Officers educated 3,577 young people and 1,110 professionals who work with young people about the harms of gambling, and building resilience within communities.



The workshops target young people aged 11-19yo and provide an interactive session which not only educates young people about the risk associated with gambling, but facilitates discussion about risky behaviours linked with gambling such as gaming and trading. Sessions are usually facilitated through PSHE sessions in school or community youth groups.

Our professional workshops are CPD accredited and focus on recognising risk factors, signs and symptoms of a gambling problem; how to engage with young people about gambling and signposting to help if needed. We have been very pleased with the engagement from local authority youth teams, social services and the third sector, and as a result of raising awareness have received various referrals, not only young people but adults too as a result of our work with family support teams.

Outreach & Projects

Ara runs a number of partnership projects in Wales through the auspices of the Safer Gambling Movement (partnered with Beacon Counselling Trust). The Safer Gambling Movement describes Ara and Beacon's leadership in developing a grassroots movement to build momentum for a national public health approach in Great Britain by first building this capacity in England and Wales – for communities, in communities, by communities.

The Safer Gambling Movement has adopted a public health approach by designing programmes and strategies that operate through three prevention levers.

- Primary prevention: preventing problematic and at-risk behaviour (i.e., in people who do not gamble, gamble recreationally, and who are at low-risk of harm from gambling)

- Secondary prevention: mitigating or reducing harms in those identified at-risk (i.e., people at moderate risk)

- Tertiary prevention: providing treatment and support to reduce the impact of gambling harms (i.e., in people who experience problem gambling)

Projects currently running in Wales include:

‘Breaking the Sharam’

Gambling harms support within South Asian Communities in Wales

Ara provides free non-judgmental, culturally sensitive and appropriate advice on accessing specialist, confidential support to anyone experiencing gambling related harms within South Asian communities in Wales. We also provide free gambling harms education and training workshops supporting children and young people, community organisations, volunteers, professionals, faith leaders and Islamic scholars.

‘The Six to Ten Project’

Supporting Affected Others

Wales is a pilot area for the Six to Ten project: a new, free and confidential support service aimed at providing comprehensive advice and advocacy to the reported 6 to 10 people negatively affected by an individual suffering with gambling harms. Alongside free and confidential counselling through the National Gambling Treatment Service, Six to Ten project clients will have a dedicated support worker who will advise and broker community engagement with a range of organisations on the client’s behalf. Areas of support include housing, financial advice, mental and physical health, legal support and building relationships and resilience, to improve quality of life.



‘Bet You Can Help’

Practical First Aid for Gambling Related Harms

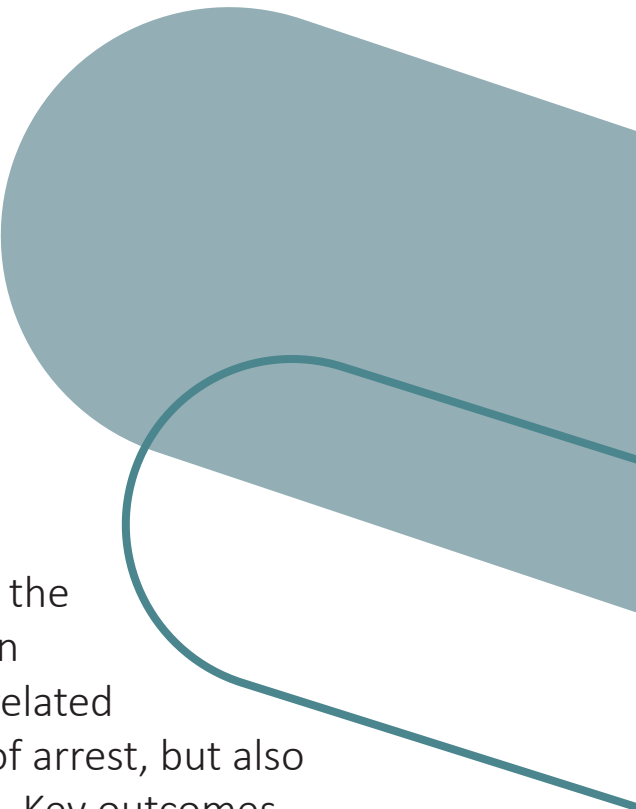
The ‘Bet You Can Help’ (BYCH) training programme aims to educate learners, using an accredited, uniform, and consistent set of messaging regarding Gambling Related Harms (GRH) and the associated issues, through an ethos that emphasises a Public Health Approach. In partnership with Beacon Counselling Trust and the RCA Trust in Scotland, the full course outcome is a Level 2 award in tackling gambling related harms (accredited by the Royal Society for Public Health and regulated by Ofqual)



‘Arresting Problem Gambling’

Criminal Justice Settings

In partnership with Beacon Counselling Trust in the North West, Ara is creating an early intervention framework across Wales concerning gambling related harms and criminality, specifically at the point of arrest, but also throughout the criminal justice system process. Key outcomes include introducing gambling harms screening in to custody suites, and upskilling those working in criminal justice to recognize the signs of gambling-related harms.



165 staff have been trained so far, including:

- PCSO New recruits In Gwent
- South Wales Police Federation trained and conversations with Dyfed & Gwent
- Dyfed Powys Custody Suite Officers training booked for Autumn 2022
- Ongoing engagement with Welsh Probation
- Dyffodol (South Wales Police)
- Additionally a framework and pathway for Out Of Court Disposals (OOCDD) set up for South Wales Police & North Wales.

Thought Leadership

The Welsh Government are leading the way in adopting a public health approach to gambling, in which the emphasis is on upstream prevention strategies for non-problem gamblers, rather than problem gambling treatment. We agree adopting a public health approach to gambling is critical because:

- Gambling-related harms are complex, including financial harms, relationship harm, emotional harms, decrements to physical health, cultural harm, reduced performance at work/study, and criminal activity.
- Individuals, families, and communities can be impacted by gambling-related harm.
- Gambling behaviour and harm are influenced by a wide variety of social, cultural, political, institutional, and environmental factors.



Partner Agencies:

Ara participate in a number of Welsh Government forums, including the Task and Finish Group on Gambling Related Harm (chaired by CMO Frank

Atherton), and the Cross Party Groups on Gambling Related Harm (chaired by Jenny Rathbone MS). Through our partnership working in Wales we aim to raise awareness of gambling harms, and promote frictionless accessibility to treatment. Partner agencies that we have engaged with include:

Partner Agencies:

- Teams Around The Family
- Families First (across Wales)
- Flying Start (across Wales)
- Platform
- Local authority youth services
- Cardiff Youth Service
- ESYT – Ethnic Youth Support Team
- Cardiff University
- James Davis MP for Clwyd
- Carolyn Harris MP for Swansea East
- University of South Wales
- Swansea University – CONNECT Project
- Aberystwyth University
- Barod
- Shelter Wales
- HMP Usk
- HMP Parc
- Communities for Work
- The Wallich
- CAIS
- Hafal
- School Beat Officers (trained all school based police officers in all 4 forces)
- HMP Parc YOI
- Action for Children
- Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations
- Gwent – GAVO
- Cardiff Third Sector Council
- Interlink – Rhondda, RCT
- Swansea – SCVS
- Torfaen – TVA
- Merthyr – VAMT
- Powys – PAVO
- Pembrokeshire – PAVS
- Gwent Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm Group
- Powys Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm Group
- Trussell Trust
- All Wales Charity Armed Forces Group
- MaPs <https://moneyandpensionservice.org.uk/tag/wales/>
- Caerphilly Local Government
- Citizens Advice – Direct referral process through Refernet
- Adferiad
- Betsi Cadwallader Health Board
- Cardiff & Vale Health Board
- Aneurin Bevan HB
- Public Health Wales
- Prof Simon Dymond
- Gwent MH and Learning Disabilities
- Jac Lewis Foundation (Supports families who have lost a loved one through suicide)



In April 2022 we travelled around North Wales on a Gambling Harms Roadshow, meeting the public and partners in Llandundo, Rhyl and Wrexham to spread the word that people suffering harms are not alone. We met with representatives from local MPs, Social Services, banks, food banks, the police and other third sector agencies as well as distributing leaflets and self-help materials to interested members of the public. Every GP practice within Wales was contacted and information around gambling harms support was sent.

Within the Criminal Justice system in Wales, we have trained over 160 staff so far in 2022, with many more in the diary. These include:

- PCSO New recruits In Gwent
- South Wales Police Federation trained and conversations with Dyfed & Gwent
- Dyfed Powys Custody Suite Officers training booked for Autumn – (around 170 people)
- POBL (<https://www.poblgroup.co.uk>)
- O OCD Gwent trained
- O OCD set up for South Wales Police & North Wales
- Ongoing engagement with Welsh Probation