

GAMBLING COMMISSION

8 January 2024

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██████████
Gambling with Lives

By email: ██████████@gamblingwithlives.org

Dear ██████████

I am writing to you regarding the Gambling with Lives December Newsletter and in my role overseeing the Gambling Commission's statistics function.

In the newsletter you state 'new figures from the Gambling Commission suggest levels of gambling addiction in the UK could be eight times higher'. Our statisticians have advised that this is an incorrect use of the data and is something that we have previously highlighted in our submissions to the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee.

There are no statistics published by us on the rate of gambling addiction and we are not aware of any other data that seeks to measure addiction at a population level rather than in an individual clinical setting. Statistics that use the Problem Gambling Severity Index, as the Gambling Survey of Great Britain does, are unable to provide a measure of addiction and therefore those scoring 8 or more (the threshold used by the index to define problem gambling) cannot automatically be classified as being addicted. Any attempt to suggest that this data, or indeed any other collected by the Commission, can give a measure of addiction levels would be a misuse of the statistics.

It is essential in the debate around gambling reform that data is used accurately. We are in a period where a significant programme of reforms is being delivered as a result of the Gambling White Paper. It is vital that those reforms are implemented based upon accurate use of the evidence that is available to us in order to ensure that regulatory changes deliver the outcomes and enhanced consumer protections that we are all seeking.

I would be grateful if you could share this letter with your team so that any future references to our statistics reflect an accurate and appropriate use of that data.

Yours sincerely,

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