

## **GAMBLING PROBLEM**

### **TREATING GAMBLING ADDICTION**

A gambling addiction, also called compulsive gambling, is the uncontrollable urge to keep gambling despite the toll it takes on your life. A gambling addiction has the potential to ruin more than one life if left untreated. Here you can learn about gambling addiction symptoms, treatment and some facts around the problem in Ireland

### **GAMBLING ADDICTION SYMPTOMS**

Diagnosing a gambling addiction can be harder within certain countries compared to others due to varying accepted levels of social behaviour. This is particularly true for a country such as Ireland, as activities related to some behavioural addictions are embedded in Irish society and everyday activities. For example, gambling is strongly associated with sports in general, including GAA. Routinely buying a Lotto ticket is also considered a common national pastime (Fulton, 2015)

Some of the most telling and obvious symptoms of a gambling addiction problem are the urge to continually 'chase' gambling losses with more gambling and resulting financial debt due to this behaviour. However, a gambling addiction is one of the most difficult to detect due to its often secretive nature; particularly these days due to the growing popularity of online and mobile gambling.

Still, there are some symptoms of gambling addiction to look out for: **Mood swings.** Those closest to diagnosed problem gamblers have said that mood swings were a significant sign of a problem, including highs and lows, irritability and short-tempered responses (Fulton, 2015).

**Unhappiness or depression.** According to research by Professor David Forrest of Liverpool University, problem gamblers can often be 'as miserable as cancer patients', as such, being a problem gambler also tripled the likelihood of extreme unhappiness (Forrest, 2012).

**Dishonest behaviour.** Those addicted to gambling often act dishonestly. A prime example is dishonestly taking money from loved ones, friends or employers. Other examples may also include starting arguments purely as an excuse to gamble (Fulton, 2015).

**Secretive or evasive.** In order to hide their gambling problem from others, those addicted to gambling can be secretive and evasive about financial matters or their whereabouts. Those closest to a problem gambler have said that the lying and secrecy were two of the most difficult behaviours to understand (Fulton, 2015).

**Preoccupation with gambling.** Meaning an excessive preoccupation with gambling and self-isolation from others in order to spend more time

gambling. This type of behaviour can also lead to unreliability. For example, being unable to pay bills despite being paid a wage.

**Physical signs.** While a gambling addiction is one of the hardest to recognise on the outside, there are some physical signs related to the problem. For example, they may appear exhausted due to their excessive preoccupation with gambling, possibly resulting in insomnia. As well as possibly leading to issues around hygiene and grooming (Fulton, 2015).

## **GAMBLING ADDICTION TREATMENT**

### **AT WGRC**

Gambling addictions in Ireland have largely gone unnoticed by the general populous until, perhaps, the last few years where there has been a surge in popularity in online gambling – which has led to a far younger age profile of those with gambling problems. However, here at WGRC, we have been supporting people through gambling rehabilitation for many years.

We have various treatments available for gambling related addictions, ranging from gambling counseling sessions to referral to full residential care. With 16 years of experience in addiction and high abstinence rates, we're confident we can help those that need it most.

## **GAMBLING ADDICTION IN IRELAND –**

### **THE FACTS**

While research within Ireland has been limited, there are some starting statistics related to the gambling addiction in Ireland:

Roughly 7% of gamblers are at risk of developing a gambling problem (Freyne, 2015). Roughly less than 1 % of gamblers have a gambling addiction – however, approximately 30-35% of the gambling industry's revenues comes from those who have gambling issues (Freyne, 2015) Gambling is moving online, making it harder to track the behavioural activity of a loved one. In 2008, there were 1,365 betting shops in Ireland, which reduced to 948 in 2015. Paddy Power says that 77% of its profits comes from the online side of the industry.

According to the Institute of Public Health in Ireland, gambling addiction

affects young people at 2-3 times the rate of adults.

Over €5bn each year is gambled in Ireland – that's €10,000 every minute.

12% of Irish Adults bet with a bookmaker on a weekly basis and 2% bet regularly online.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

We at WGRC have dealt with gambling addictions for many years – we can help. If you have any concerns about your own gambling habits or those of a loved one, please pick up the phone to contact us. We are firmly of the opinion that, in Ireland in particular, people wait far too long to make the call to seek addiction treatment. Gambling rehabilitation and change are much more attainable if treatment is sought at an early stage.

Gambling can be difficult to give up and you may have to try a few different things, but recovery is possible no matter how hopeless the situation may feel.

Allow us to help you today – call 01-4198630 or you can call [Problem Gambling Ireland](#) for information and support on 089 2415401

If you or someone you care about has a gambling problem, [you can find a list of services that can help here](#)

**text about it**

**text WGRC  
50808**

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### **Feeling overwhelmed or want to talk to someone right now?**

Get anonymous support 24/7 with our text message support service

Connect with a trained

Free – text WGRC to 50808 to begin

# REFERENCES

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