

PROBLEM GAMBLING FACT SHEETS

DUNLEWEY ADDICTION SERVICES



FAMILY MEMBERS & FRIENDS
INFORMATION FOR SERVICE USERS
COUNSELLING SERVICES
SELF-EXCLUSION
RESPONSIBLE GAMBLING
SELF-HELP WORKSHEETS

Who are Dunlewey Gambling Service?

Dunlewey Addiction Service was founded in 1987 and has become a specialist organisation in the provision of counselling, training, and support. The Dunlewey Gambling Service was established in the early 2000's to deal with the growing number of service users presenting into the service with dual addiction, alcohol/gambling, or drugs/gambling.

What we Offer

Dunlewey Gambling Service offer a free and confidential counselling and mentoring programme for those experiencing difficulties with their own, or other people's gambling issues. Our staff are professionally trained and have many years' experience in the field of addiction.

How to Make Contact

The easiest way to contact Dunlewey is simply to pick up the phone.

Head Office: 028 9039 2547

Helpline: N.I. 08000 886 725 R.O.I. 1800 936 725

Email: admin@dunlewey.org

Website: www.dunlewey.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/dunlewey>

What happens when you phone our helpline/office?

Our helpline is open 365 days a year from 9 am to 11 pm, this call is the first point of contact that most of our service users will have with Dunlewey. We understand the anxiety that can sometimes prelude this call so it is answered in a non-judgmental, compassionate manner, with the aim to reassure the service users that they have made a brave but what can be a life changing decision.

After this initial call, the gambling coordinator will call you back usually within 48 hours. This is a short call to assess the situation and discuss what kind of sessions will work best for the service user.

Our head office in Belfast is based in:

247 Cavehill Road, BT15 5BS

We Also Have a Base in:

ABC Magharee House, 82 Thomas Street Portadown, BT61 7AE

Face to Face counselling is available from both bases.

We have trained sessional counsellors that work from several locations throughout Ireland to provide face to face, online video calls or telephone calls if this is preferred.

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Family Members & Friends

Family members/friends can be severely affected by the problem gambling behaviour of a loved one. Our service offers free support and counselling to anyone who may be experiencing relationship difficulties including loss of trust and feelings of betrayal, shame, burnout, and stress or financial problems.

Recognise the Signs

Uncontrolled spending

Significant amounts of time spent gambling.

Concealing or lying about gambling behaviour

Gambling behaviour that impacts on relationships with family & friends.

Withdrawal from family activities

Spending excessive amounts of time on a computer/mobile

No apparent interest or leisure pursuits

Absence from school, college, or work

Some Feelings Family Members/Friends may Experience

There are several feelings that a family member or friend can experience:

Disbelief, Shock, Anger, Shame, Hopelessness, Mistrust, Worry, Fear.

These are just a few examples of how some family members have felt after a disclosure from a loved one concerning a gambling problem.

Some Family Members' Reactions Have Included:

Displays of anger, tears, giving ultimatums, withholding affection, Issuing demands, panic around debt.

Is The Service For Me?

Family members or friends sometimes ask,

“Why do I need help or support, I’m not the one with the problem”

For every person that has a problem with gambling it is estimated another 6-8 people are affected either directly or in-directly.

Dunlewey wants you to know you are not alone. How you are feeling can be overwhelming and having a listening ear can offer great support at a time of crisis.

All our staff are trained to offer this support in a non-judgmental way, we regularly receive positive feedback from family members who have benefited from our service.

Some family members comments

“I found the service absolutely fantastic and to be honest, it has been invaluable to me.”

“When my husband disclosed the severity of his gambling problem I didn’t know where to turn. Dunlewey helped our family to get through”

We offer up to 6 sessions, but this may be extended to 12 depending on the need.

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What is Counselling?

Counselling is a listening ear.

How many of us really listen to what is being said either through words or actions/behaviour? The most important part of the counselling process is that the counsellor actively listens in a non-judgmental, genuine, empathic manner.

As every service user is an individual, our counsellors will work in a way that best meets their needs.

Our counsellors are professionally qualified and are registered with either B.A.C.P. or the I.A.C.P and they all have experience working in the field of addiction. Our counsellors are also trained in working with problem gambling.

Dunlewey have devised our own problem gambling awareness training programme that is accredited by OCN in levels 1, 2 & 3.

To best meet the needs of service users our counsellors use an integrative model of the following: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, Person Centred Therapy.

During the initial assessment after the contract has been explained, the counsellor will get an understanding of 'where' the service user is in terms of motivation to change. Are they feeling ready to embrace change are they are coping with depression or high anxiety. We also explore the cycle of change in this assessment. Does the person see their behaviour as a problem or are they here to please another? Have they been in recovery before or is this their first-time seeking support?

If the gambling is on-line, we will discuss the option to close all on-line sites, we can also talk about self-barring from local book makers. We can help to signpost to other relevant organisations.

The sessions that will follow the assessment are usually on a weekly basis but again this depends on the needs of the service user. Some clients are working shift work and may only be able to attend fortnightly. Others may want to stagger their appointments and can avail of fortnightly or monthly sessions towards the end of the process.

We initially offer up to 6 sessions, but this may be extended to 12 depending again on the needs of the service user. Anyone completing the service can refer again after 6 months, should they feel it necessary.

Confidentiality is an essential part of the counselling relationship. For most service users the counselling room will be the first place that disclosures are made around past trauma. Clients need to know that what is being said will be held with respect and not repeated. The contract that is covered during the assessment will support this practice, but there are also limits to this. The counsellor will explain that should the client be at risk of ending their life or have thoughts of harm to another this information will be passed on and the relevant authorities will be involved where deemed appropriate. Next of kin details are recorded to use when necessary.

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Self-Exclusion

The process of self-exclusion is easy, taking steps to follow through can be the challenging part. The realisation that a behaviour which may be part of daily life is causing pain to both self and others cannot be unknown. In the 'cycle of change' this is defined as contemplation, what you choose to do with this awareness will impact on your gambling behaviour.

For the individual that wants to embrace change, self-exclusion can be extremely helpful. Although this is usually a significant step in addressing and changing the problem behaviour, the service user must want to commit. Self-exclusion ranges from 6 months to 5 years and during this time your on-line accounts will be suspended. On-line sites are simple to navigate with a link to 'safer gambling' that you follow, this will also offer several helplines and services for anyone that wants further support.

If you have several on-line sites, you can close them collectively by downloading an app for your device. This app can be obtained free in Northern Ireland from the UK web site 'GAMCARE, again the website is easy to navigate to links for either 'GAMBAN or GAMSTOP'

To close on-line sites in the Republic of Ireland there is a small price to use GAMBAN, £2.08/ 2.44 euro per month or a yearly payment of £24.99/ 29.31 euro. You can use Bet Filter or Bet Blocker for free.

Many banks also offer the option to reduce or completely stop you spending your money on online sites. You will have to give your bank permission to block your card/account from being used in gambling transactions.

To self-exclude from bookie shops in the UK, N.I. or R.O.I., you can request a self-exclusion form in store, to complete and submit with 2 ID photos.

This can be more labor intensive if you live in an area with many bookies, but it can also have a positive impact on the service user as they feel they are taking back a level of control over their behaviour which is good for rebuilding self-esteem. It is also a way of demonstrating to family or friends that you are motivated to change and prepared to act and follow it through.

Helpful Contacts:

Dunlewey Helpline on 1800 936 725 or 08000 886 725

National Gambling Helpline 08088020133

<https://www.betknowmoreuk.org/help/information-and-signposting>

Debt Support:

Mabs Money Advice and Budgeting Service (funded by Citizens Information Board, Ireland)

www.mabs.ie helpline 0761 072000 for callback

email helpline@mabs.ie

Advice NI www.adviceni.net info@adviceni.net

1 Rushfield Avenue, BT7 3FP. Tel: 02890645919

Debt Action 0800 028 1881 #LetsTalkAboutDebt

Free impartial Debt Advice

The Vine Centre, 193 Crumlin Road, Belfast BT14 6FNT: 028 9244 8737

National Debtline:

www.nationaldebtline.co.uk

www.payplan.com/gamcare/

www.citizensadvice.org.uk

www.debtadvicefoundation.org

www.talkaboutdebt.co.uk

www.stepchange.org - online debt advice, debt management plan, online tools, policy & campaigns, budgeting education programmes

Christians Against Poverty

Debt Counselling Charity with debt centres in NI. www.capuk.org

Jubilee Mill, North Street, Bradford, BD1 4EW.

New enquiries: 0800 328 0006

Responsible Gambling

If you have any concerns around your gambling behaviour, there are simple measures that you can apply.

- Recognise gambling for what it is, entertainment. It is not a reliable way to make money.
- Only bet what you can afford to lose.
- Be mindful of your mood. Gambling when upset, angry or lonely can become a way of coping.
- Know your limits and stick to them.
- Inform your bank to put limits on your spending either daily or weekly.
- Avoid chasing losses.
- Take regular time out.
- Don't replace time with your friends and family with time gambling. Life is better with balance.
- Talk to someone about your concerns, problem gambling can cause feelings of isolation.
- If you find a smart phone is too accessible for placing bets or playing online games, have an alternative phone with no internet, just for making calls.
- Check out your online betting sites for information regarding responsible gambling. There are links on all sites.
- Call [Dunlewey](#) for advice, we are here to listen.

Self-help Worksheets

One of the most important parts of recovery from a gambling problem or changing behaviour before it becomes a problem, is self-help.

This is not always apparent for service users. Most will have issues around guilt and shame so putting their needs first can seem indulgent.

However, if we recognise gambling as a way of coping, to sustain recovery there must be a new way to cope.

A place to start can be online Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) self-help worksheets. There are several on-line sites that offer free downloads that you can look through and print off.

This will help focus change, where the service user can make short term and longer-term achievable goals. It can be helpful to re-visit previous past times if they are still relevant. Perhaps you don't feel physically fit to play football anymore but could you coach? Would you have a couple of hours a week to volunteer for a charity? Lived experience can be a great source of knowledge and can help reignite passion and enrichment, helping to re-build self-esteem and confidence, which is normally eroded with addiction.

Here's a few examples:

Activity Diary, Weekly Planner, Thought Record Sheets, Relationship Worksheets, Self-coaching. There are worksheets for most issues, and you will find examples completed on-line, so you get an idea of what you're aiming to achieve.

On-line resources:

<https://www.getselfhelp.co.uk/free-downloads-2-cbt-worksheets/>

<https://www.talkingchange.nhs.uk/resources>

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