

## Regulus to Commission: return to NHS data and regain credibility

The UK Gambling Commission has failed to enforce its own guidance on the use and misuse of official statistics, says Regulus Partner, with the industry analysts calling for a return to the NHS Health Survey.

Since June 2024, the regulator has issued 21 notifications regarding the inappropriate use of statistics, primarily related to its Gambling Survey for Great Britain (GSGB). However, in over two-thirds of cases, no corrective action has been taken, with only three organisations making full and unmitigated corrections.

"The situation is entirely of the Gambling Commission's own making," wrote a spokesperson for Regulus Partners. "It elected to proceed with the publication of the GSGB despite strong evidence of its unreliability and in contravention of the terms of its public consultation in 2020."

Despite pledging to take a tough stance on the misrepresentation of its new data, the regulator has taken no visible action against persistent offenders. According to Regulus Partners, this inaction may put the Commission in violation of the UK Statistics Authority's Code of Practice for Statistics, which mandates that data producers challenge the inappropriate use of statistics and take measures to prevent further misuse.

### GAMBLING STATISTICS

The consistent misrepresentation of the **Gambling Survey for Great Britain** is a problem of the Gambling Commission's own making, according to **Regulus Partners**, who called for the regulator to clean up its mess and bring back the NHS Health Survey as the primary source of gambling-related harm data.



And one needs to look no further than the adoption of 2.5 percent as the rate of problem gambling - an unofficial figure from the GSGB that has been allowed to run free by the Commission which has failed, and some say hasn't even bothered, to try to rein that figure back in.

A fortnight ago at the ICE expo in Barcelona, Rhodes acknowledged that the GSGB's reception had been "challenging, despite the many years of preparation, consultation, engagement and external evaluation". True, but then that is down to the fact that a large number of

observers argue that the preparation was poor and the basis ill-conceived; consultation was either dismissed or ignored by the regulator; the engagement was a diktat; and the external evaluation is considered far more accurate than that of a defensive regulator more concerned at protecting its reputation than repairing its flawed survey.

Which is somewhere close to what Regulus Partners contends: this difficulty stems from the Commission's refusal to address the survey's flaws, suggesting a return to the NHS Health Survey.

"While significant doubts attend the accuracy of the GSGB in terms of prevalence, our National Health Service should continue to be trusted to produce health statistics," concluded Regulus Partners. "In the meantime, the regulator should wake up to the fact that its guidance on the use of official statistics has been both confusing and ineffective. Having pledged to take a robust approach to misuse of statistics, it is time for the Commission to step up. Its credibility depends upon it."

### Wake up call

**Dan Waugh said...**  
 "...the regulator should wake up to the fact that its guidance on the use of official statistics has been both confusing and ineffective. Having pledged to take a robust approach to misuse of statistics, it is time for the Commission to step up. Its credibility depends upon it..."

## ARE Expo 2025 unveils key workshop sessions

**ARE Expo**, the new kid on the trade show block, has announced its schedule of workshop sessions to run alongside the inaugural event at the Cotton Sheds in Manchester on 29-30 April. The exhibition, designed to assemble industry professionals, innovators and thought leaders in that key pre-summer season slot, has focused on regulation and innovation - the two areas in the spotlight for 2025 as the UK grapples with the roll-out of the Gambling Act Review.

Meeting that expectation, or trepidation as some may wonder, ARE has released details of some of the key workshop sessions which will be taking place within the High Street Hub, run by the Gambling Business Group, and Leisure Entertainment Lab, two dedicated spaces designed to tackle the most pressing topics in the amusement, retail, and entertainment industries.

Karen Cooke, organiser of ARE Expo and Director of Swan Events, emphasised the value of these sessions, stating: "This is a

### TRADE EVENT

The highly anticipated **Amusement & Retail Entertainment Expo** will mark its debut on the trade show calendar with an ambitious schedule of workshop sessions which it has unveiled this week.



great opportunity for visitors to ARE to access valuable learning opportunities for free, just steps away from the main exhibition hall. No two sessions will clash - so all the content will be available to everyone."

Topping the workshop bill will be the High Street Hub: Addressing Key Regulatory and Customer

### Engagement Topics.

Under the authoritative purview of the Gambling Business Group, the High Street Hub will feature a series of expert-led discussions focusing on: innovation in the gambling sector alongside legislative developments and the future of the industry including:

- Martyn's Law - Understanding

the impact of proposed counterterrorism legislation on high street businesses and leisure venues.

- Digital ID - Exploring the implementation of digital identity solutions for age verification, security, and seamless customer transactions.
- Customer Interaction - Best practices for enhancing customer engagement and fostering responsible play in gaming and retail settings.
- Positive Play - Insights into fostering a safer, more enjoyable gaming environment that promotes responsible participation.

Also on the ARE schedule is the Leisure Entertainment Lab: Innovations Driving the Future of Entertainment workshop which will be led by The Amusement Network and serve as a think tank for innovation and industry evolution, tackling key trends and challenges

within the entertainment and leisure sectors. Sessions confirmed for discussion include:

- Taking Play to New Places - Exploring how location-based entertainment is evolving to create unique and immersive experiences.
- Enhance the Customer Journey - Understanding how technology and service enhancements can elevate guest satisfaction and increase repeat visits.
- The Talent Trap: Attracting, Training, and Retaining Staff - Addressing the ongoing challenges of recruitment and workforce development in the sector.
- Data-Driven Insights: Where to Invest for New Revenue Streams - Harnessing analytics and emerging market trends to make informed business decisions.

Further details on the full workshop schedule and speaker line-up will be announced by ARE soon.