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**Harnessing lived experience in a community-based intervention to address gambling-related harms**

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**Background:**

Lived experience of people directly or indirectly affected by public health issues can provide unique insights into how to improve interventions. Increasing availability of gambling necessitates involving communities in efforts to reduce gambling-related harms. This presentation reports qualitative exploratory research into the value of lived experience across a city-region gambling harm reduction initiative in the UK.

**Methods:**

Focus groups and interviews were used to explore the practical application of lived experience with participants: advisory panel members, external stakeholders, community project staff, and public health professionals. Collaborative data analysis combined the framework method with theme development inductively (from participants' accounts) and deductively (from academic and grey literature).

**Results:**

Four themes were identified: (1) lived experience spans formal and informal settings with different activities and personal impacts; (2) organic and structured pathways to lived experience involvement coexist; (3) the emotional work of people affected by gambling-related harms ranges from frustration at policy inertia to deeper understanding of their own recovery journey; and (4) lived experience encompasses diverse experiential knowledges.

**Conclusions:**

Involving lived experience in this intervention increased participants' awareness of the harmful role of the gambling industry and critical reflection on the representativeness of lived experience. Harnessing lived experience at a regional level requires multi-setting support free from stigma and industry influence to ensure the sustained vitality of a diverse lived experience community specialised in gambling-related harms and equipped to navigate conflicting emotions and a challenging policy environment.

**Key messages:**

- Increasing availability of gambling necessitates involving communities in efforts to reduce gambling-related harms.
- The use of lived experience in gambling-related harms prevention efforts and research can inform intervention development.