



SECTOR SIGNALS REPORT / 02

Normalizing Harm Prevention

*How Four Design Shifts
are Making Safer Play the Default*

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Six reports. One evolving industry.

THE SERIES IN BRIEF

In this six-part series, the **Responsible Gambling Council** shares the emerging trends most affecting the global gambling industry. Each report draws on jurisdictional evidence from leading markets and unpacks what those shifts mean for operators, regulators, and policymakers.

WHO IT'S FOR

Operators

Strategy, product, and compliance leads

Regulators

Standards setters and supervisory bodies

Policymakers

Public-health and policy decision-makers



INTRODUCTION

From Help Menu To Default Experience

Effective responsible gambling is increasingly understood as part of everyday play; embedded into product design, the moments of decision, and the rhythm of the player journey, rather than siloed as a last-resort support feature. Operators and regulators alike are moving RG tools from the help menu to the default experience, with limits, statements, and nudges normalized as standard account features.

FOUR REFERENCE MARKETS

United Kingdom

Mandatory deposit-limit prompts, six-month reviews

Oct 2025

Massachusetts

PlayMyWay budget tool across three casinos

46K users

Victoria, AU

Standardized monthly player activity statements

Apr 2024

Norway

Mandatory loss limits with net-loss tracking

Feb 2025

Four Pillars of an Embedded Player Journey

Across regulatory and operator practice, harm prevention is being designed into the player experience, not bolted on as an opt-in safety net. Four pillars demonstrate how that shift is taking shape.

01

Embedded By Default

Limits, calculators, and activity statements live inside the regular account experience; never buried in a separate help menu.

02

Mandatory Over Voluntary

Voluntary uptake rarely exceeds the low single digits. Mandatory delivery shifts it sharply: 38.9% self-test completion versus 4.8% on voluntary invitations.

03

Matched to High-Risk Moments

Tools are always available; prompts and outreach are timed to higher-risk moments: chasing losses, long sessions, declined deposits, late-night play.

04

Escalation Pathways

Automated nudges step up to personalized contact, human conversation, and warm handoffs to clinical support when patterns persist.

P I L L A R 0 1

Embedded By Default

Limit-setting, activity statements, and self-assessment tools are being moved into the regular account flow, placed where players already are, rather than under a separate help label.

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Mandatory Limit Prompts At Account Opening

Under new License Conditions and Codes of Practice rules, every licensed online operator in Great Britain must prompt customers to set a financial limit before their first deposit, and re-prompt every six months. Limit prompts, customer-entered deposit caps, six-month review reminders, and a cooling-off window before any increase takes effect. From 30 June 2026, only gross deposit caps may be labelled as a 'deposit limit'.

Why mandatory delivery matters: when a safer-play tool is presented to every account rather than left to the player to find, uptake jumps.

38.9%

self-test completion under mandatory delivery, versus 4.8% on voluntary invitations.

Jonsson et al., Harm Reduction Journal, 2025

PHASE 1 IN FORCE

31 Oct 2025

Limit prompts, customer-entered deposit caps, and six-month review reminders.

PHASE 2 EFFECTIVE

30 Jun 2026

Strict deposit-limit definitions, automated blocks at the cap.

Limit-First Play And Net-Loss Tracking

In Norway, mandatory personal loss limits and transparent net-loss reporting are built into the product before a player's first spin. The framework is unusual among regulated gambling markets in also prohibiting VIP programs, bonuses, free play, and other personal incentive structures.

1 in 5

Norwegian men aged 18 to 25 are at risk of gambling-related harm, a pattern seen across many markets and one of several rationales for the country's mandatory-limit model.



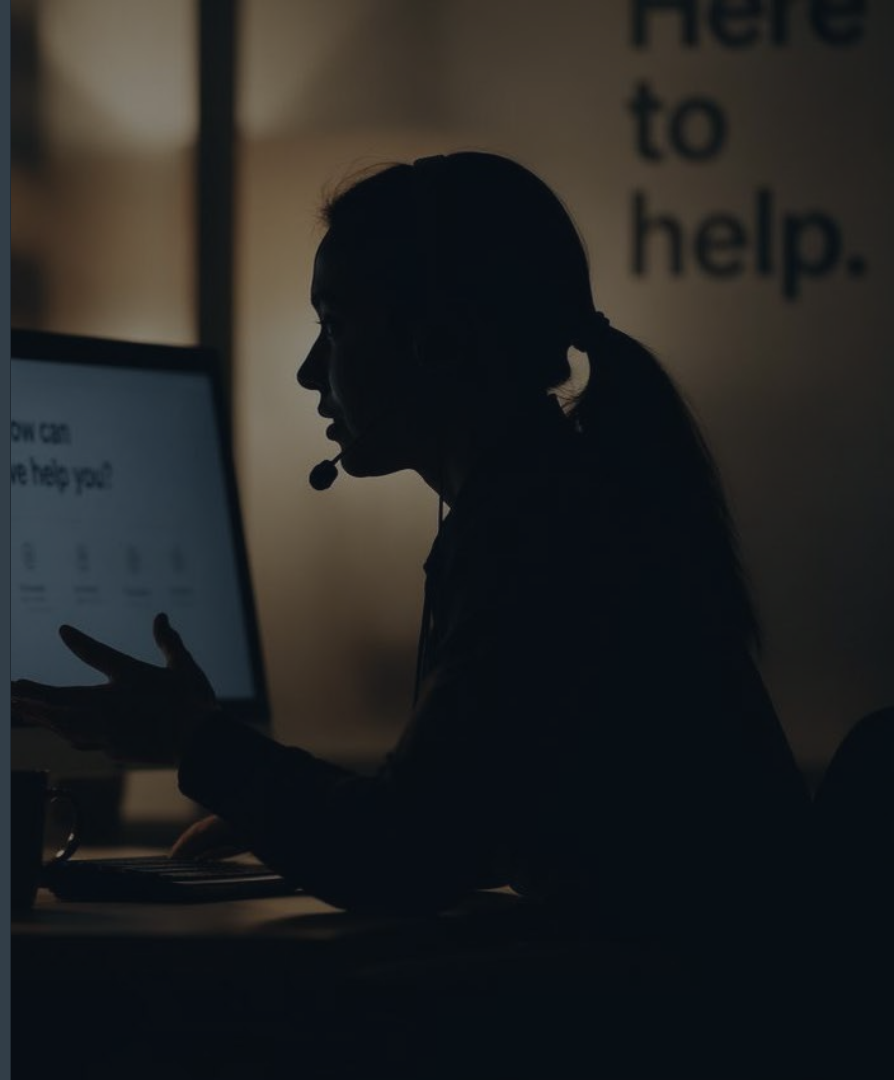
EMBEDDED IN THE PRODUCT

- **Personal loss limit**
Required before first play
- **Net-loss reporting**
Spend minus winnings
- **No autoplay**
Manual spin only
- **No near-miss cues**
No celebratory audio or lights for losses

P I L L A R 0 2

Mandatory Over Voluntary

Voluntary safer-gambling tools generally see uptake in the low single digits. Statutory mandates shift behaviour at scale, creating the conditions for prevention to become a consistent, system-wide practice.





From Operator-Set Stake Ranges To Statutory Caps

The UK now sets a legally binding maximum stake for every online slots spin: £5 for adults 25 and over, £2 for adults 18 to 24. Enforced as licence conditions, the caps replace operator-set stake ranges entirely; how much a player can stake is no longer a commercial decision.

1–3%

voluntary safer-gambling tool uptake rarely exceeded the low single digits — hard caps shift behaviour at population scale.

Gambling Commission, Online Slots Stake Limits (LCCP license conditions): £5/spin from 9 April 2025; £2/spin for ages 18–24 from 21 May 2025.

STATUTORY STAKE CAPS

Adults 25+ **£5 / spin**

Adults 18–24 **£2 / spin**

Applies to **Slots**

Effective **9 Apr 2025**

Licence conditions in force from 9 April 2025; 18–24 cap from 21 May 2025

P I L L A R 0 3

Matched to Key Moments

Tools are always available; prompts and outreach are timed to higher-risk moments: chasing losses, long sessions, declined deposits, late-night play.

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MASSACHUSETTS



PlayMyWay

Budget Tool at the Machine

A voluntary budget-setting tool, integrated through the players-club card across Encore Boston Harbor, MGM Springfield, and Plainridge Park Casino. Players set a daily, weekly, or monthly budget for slot and electronic gaming machine play and receive automatic smartphone notifications as they approach or exceed it.

* **PlayMyWay Evaluation:** enrolled players lost less per visit than non-enrolled peers.

46,185

ACTIVE ENROLMENTS

Across the three host casinos

Less

MONEY LOST PER VISIT

Enrolled players lost less overall than non-enrolled peers*

More

VISITS, MORE ENJOYMENT

Enrolled players visited more often, reported less regret*



Monthly Player Activity Statements, In Plain Language

From April 2024, every wagering provider operating in Victoria must issue a standardized monthly player activity statement. Free and bonus bets are excluded from net loss; stakes are deducted from pay-outs to show true net winnings. Plain English is mandatory, with colour use restricted to black and red so losses cannot be visually softened.

A\$11,538

penalty per non-compliant statement issued; making clarity a compliance risk.

VGCCC Activity Statement Standards, 1 April 2024

MONTHLY ACTIVITY STATEMENT

Deposits	\$300
Stakes placed	\$290
Winnings	\$30
Losses	-\$280
Bonus / free bets	Excluded
Total Loss	-\$250

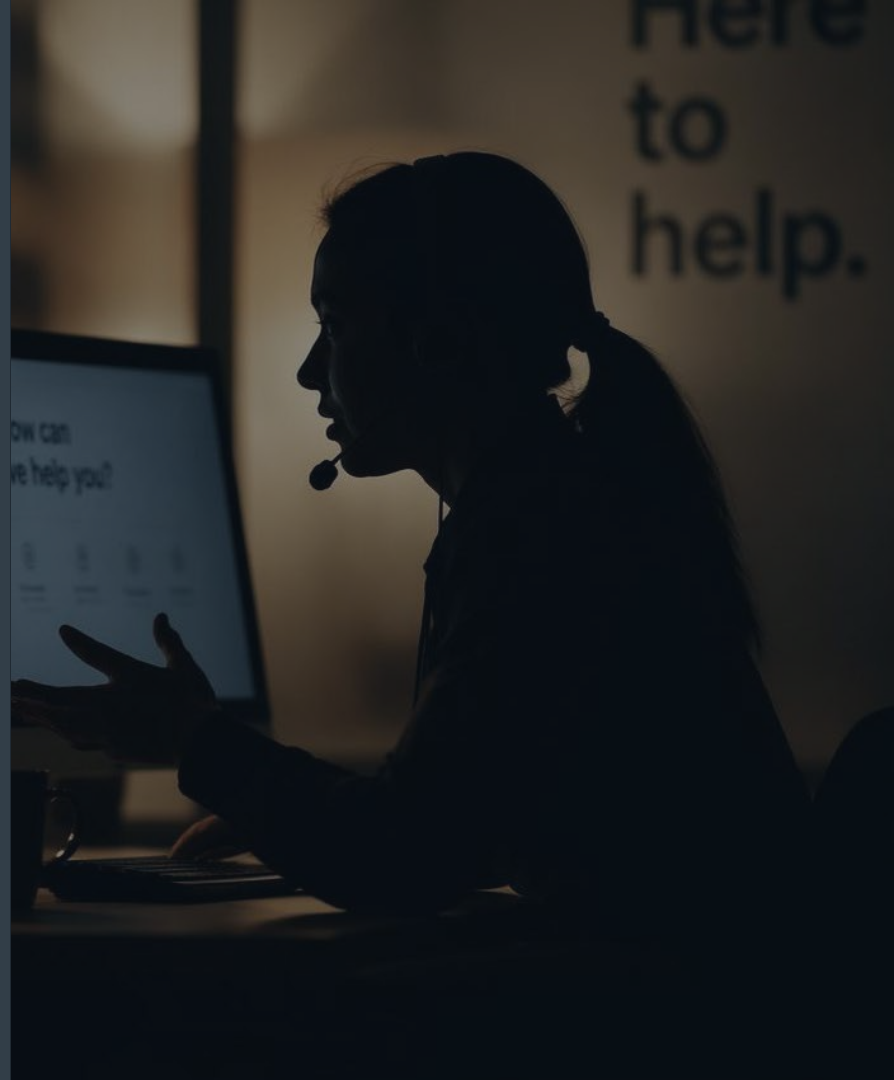
Sample shown; rules: VGCCC Activity Statement Standards

P I L L A R 0 4

Escalation Pathways

From automated nudges to personalized contact, human conversation, and warm handoffs to clinical support; the journey carries a player from in-product prompt through to professional help.

/ R G C S E C T O R S I G N A L S R E P O R T 0 2



From In-Product Nudge To Human Support

Playtech's BetBuddy platform: deployed across 15 major operators and around 30 million player accounts, illustrates how data-driven detection feeds a tiered escalation pathway. RGC worked with Playtech to map the same logic onto product experiences across both digital and land-based environments, translating the detection-to-hand-off pathway into concrete player journey moments.

01

Detect

AI models, declared data, and real-time play behaviour flag changes within 24 hours.

02

Nudge

In-session prompts surface limits, deposit pauses, and activity summaries.

03

Personalize

Customer-care teams reach out by email, SMS, or push with explainable risk insight.

04

Hand-Off

Trained staff transfer the player to clinical or helpline services where needed.

4 parallel assessment models / 200+ behavioural markers

Normalized, Embedded, Escalated.

The harm-prevention default has shifted.

01

From Help Menu To Default

Limits, calculators, and statements live in the regular account experience; visible and frictionless.

02

From Voluntary to Mandatory

Default-on prompts and standardized statements convert single-digit uptake into routine engagement.

03

From Always-On to Well-Timed

Prompts and outreach are matched to higher-risk moments: chasing losses, long sessions, declined deposits, late-night play.

04

From Tool to Pathway

Detection, nudges, personal contact, and clinical hand-off operate as one continuous journey.

HOW RGC CAN HELP

Our Advisory Services team partners with operators, regulators, and stakeholders to embed effective safer gambling practices, drawing on RGC's research, expertise, and decades of experience.

CONTACT

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responsiblegambling.org