Understanding gambling consumer engagement with digital resources for harm minimisation

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Background

❖ Almost half of Australians who gamble experience some level of gambling harm. These harms commonly impact relationships, health, and psychological wellbeing[1].

❖ Currently, existing resources for gambling consumers focus on reducing or stopping gambling behaviour. These resources typically target consumers experiencing gambling problems.

❖ Existing harm minimisation resources (e.g., self-assessment questionnaires, gambling calculators, and information on the odds of winning) are readily accessible. However, these are rarely used by low to moderate risk gambling consumers[2,3].

❖ Low uptake and engagement with digital resources is commonly reported in digital mental health research[4].

❖ Gaining insights on the factors driving or hindering the use of digital resources from various stakeholder perspectives can assist with informing the development of a prototype digital resource to encourage safer gambling.

Research Aims

1. Understand gambling consumers' motivators and barriers to engaging with resources from various stakeholder perspectives.

2. Incorporate our understanding for the motivators and barriers to inform the design of a digital resource targeted at low to moderate gambling consumers.

Method

Interviews

- 15 current consumers
- 6 Clinicians
- 6 Industry Professionals
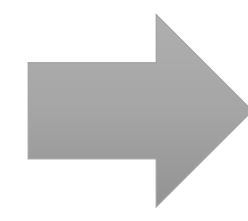
Analysis

- Content analysis on motivators and barriers towards resource engagement, and the identification of resource features
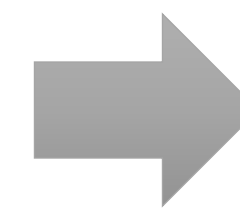
Resource Development

Results

"Knowing how much I've spent on gambling to date... I think would curb spending on gambling for me" [Consumer]
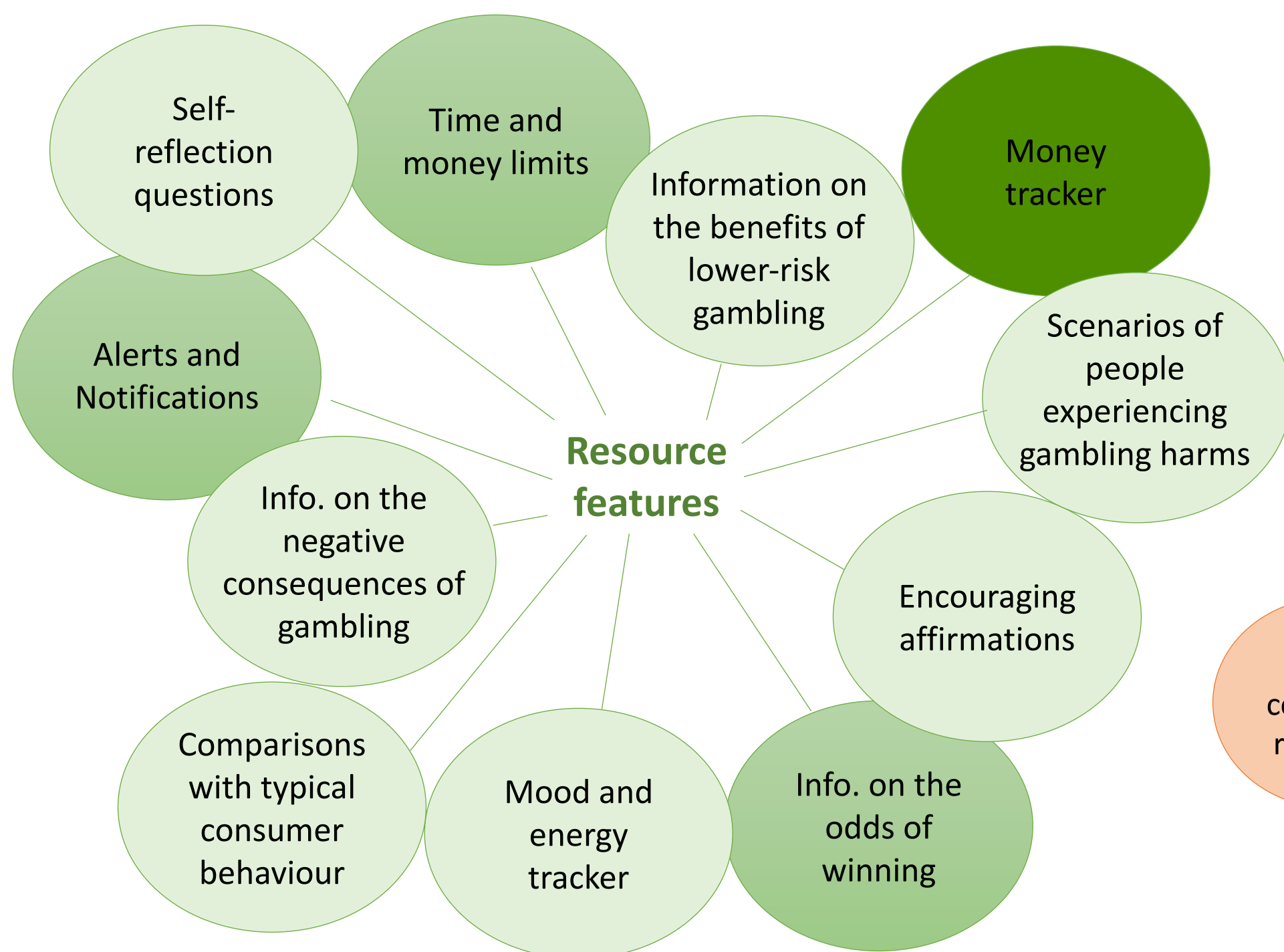*"Increase awareness that the game is built for consumers to lose money"* [Clinician]

❖ The themes identified regarding resource ideas, barriers and motivators for resource engagement are presented in Figures 1 & 2.

❖ The need for a spending tracker appeared most frequently and across all three participants groups. The simplicity of the resource and the benefits of using encouraging language within the resource were frequently occurring motivators, whilst privacy concerns and stigma were common barriers.

"There are too many options for people, and it gets confusing" [Industry Professional]
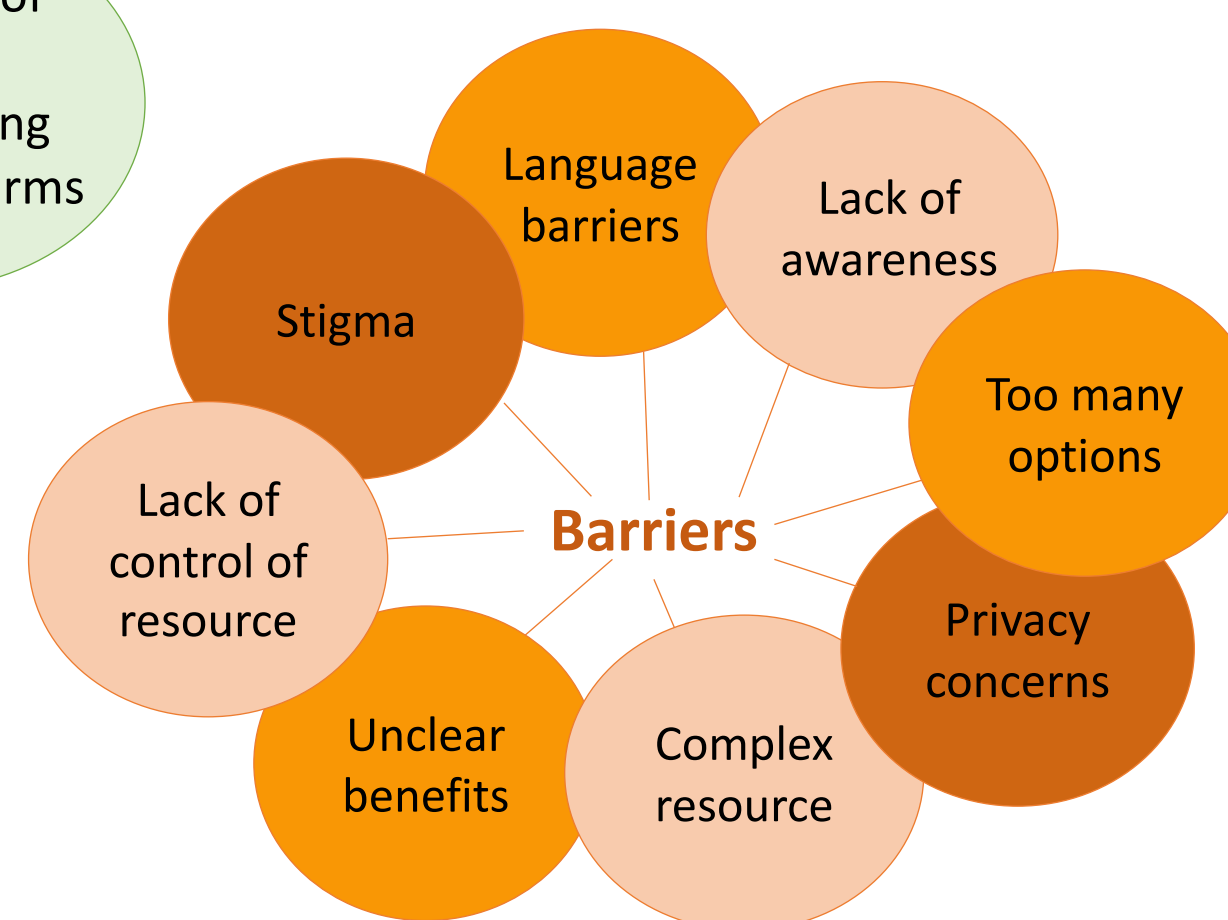
"..if there is a benefit [to using the resource], highlighting the benefit" [Consumer]
"Provide them with information that's accurate and relevant to them. If it's relevant to them...they're more inclined to read it" [Clinician]

Figure 1. Participant-identified resource features. Darker bubbles indicate a higher frequency of the feature appearing in the interviews.
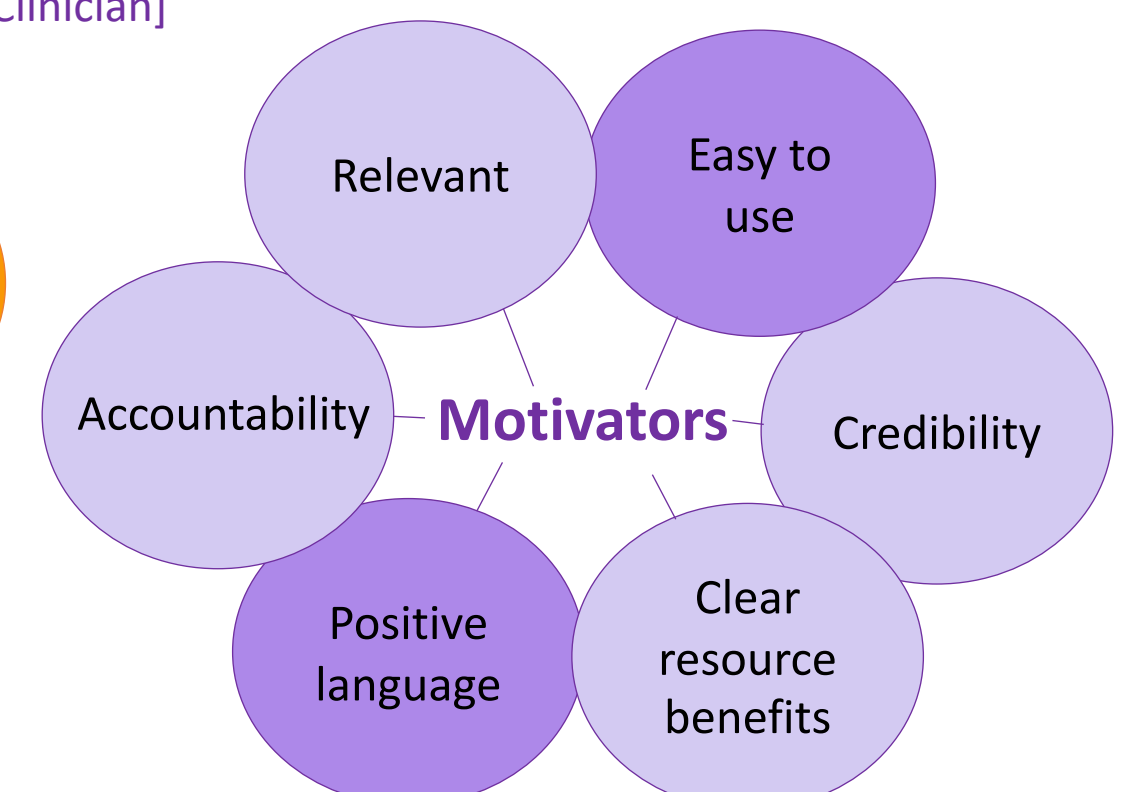
Figure 2. Identified barriers (left) and motivators (right) for resource engagement. Darker bubbles indicate a higher frequency of the barriers or motivators appearing in the interviews.

Conclusions

❖ Participants emphasise the need for a user-friendly resource with clear benefits, positive language, and privacy considerations. Factors such as ease of use, baseline behaviour comparisons, resource credibility, and reminders were motivators, whilst privacy and lack of control over the resource were perceived barriers. These align with finding from previous digital mental health research[5,6].

❖ Notably, participants expressed a desire for a readily available but typically unused resource (i.e., budget tracking). Gambling consumers typically underestimate their losses and overestimate their wins[7,8], lacking awareness for their actual spending. Providing a resource offering clear summaries of gambling-related spending could enhance consumer awareness.

❖ These finding led to the development of a budgeting resource prototype, aiming to overcome the participant-identified barriers and promote engagement by being simple and relevant to consumers. The prototype will undergo useability testing with end-users through a participatory design process.

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