Gambling Digital Tools Across the Player Spectrum: Promising Practices and Future Opportunities

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Abstract (max 200 words)

In our technology-focused culture, the supply and demand of digital information and support has skyrocketed. In the gambling field specifically, the number and breadth of available tools for the provision of support and information have increased greatly in the last few years. However, questions exist around the appropriateness, effectiveness, and implications of gambling-focused digital tools. The current program of work focuses on answering the question: How can technology be used to deliver information and support to those across the player continuum of gambling involvement and harm? To this end, we first describe the current ecosystem of digital tools (i.e., technology features, online tools, and apps) for primary prevention among those at no-to-low risk of harm, as well as secondary prevention and tertiary support among those at moderate-to-high risk. We then review the effectiveness of digital tool features and modes of delivery, drawing upon the results of the research literature, environmental scans of gambling and mental health digital tools, rapid assessments of digital tool user data, and consultations with international stakeholders and players. We conclude by outlining promising practices, discussing barriers and areas of improvement, and proposing novel ways to target areas of need specific to the gambling field.

Implications (max 50 words)

The contents and recommendations of this program of work are useful for informing the creation of collaborations, policies, and approaches to guide the development, dissemination, and evaluation of effective digital tools for people across the spectrum of gambling involvement and harm to support the prevention and mitigation of gambling-related harm.

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Bios (75 words max)

Dr. Melissa Salmon is a Senior Researcher with the Centre for the Advancement of Best Practices at the Responsible Gambling Council. Melissa has specialized in the field of gambling studies for nine years, with a background in psychological research and knowledge mobilization to guide her work. Her research broadly focuses on novel means to advance safer gambling practices, reduce gambling-related harm, and promote positive behavior change among people experiencing harm.

Dr. Sasha Stark is Senior Research Lead at Greo, an independent knowledge translation and exchange organization working across the health and wellbeing sectors. Sasha is an internationally known gambling researcher, having worked in the field for 15 years. She oversees development of Greo's knowledge synthesis products, leads research activities, and works with international stakeholders. Previously Sasha was Senior Researcher at the Responsible Gambling Council, where she led primary and applied research and evaluation activities.