



Yorkshire Humber Gambling Harms 16th Dec 2024

*Levers and Barriers to Local
Authorities adopting public health
interventions to address
gambling harms*

Learning from Research

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- Talking about gambling harms so anyone that needs to step out please do so.
- No industry funding of my research-NIHR funded but views expressed are own.
- Constantly changing evidence landscape (?deliberately destabilising?): at time of writing, levy has been announced and NICE guideline pending (but that could be different this week!)

Background

- General Practitioner (GP) in east London, UK
- Local lead for Health Equity / “Deep End London”
- Senior Clinical Lecturer at Barts & The London
- Former volunteer at GamAnon

PhD Funding declaration

- Fully funded by National Institute for Health Research
- Supported by Applied Research Collaboration
- Hosted by London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine



Gambling and local government

- Gambling premises need a licence from local government licensing team
- Local Public Health teams (now based in local government) are “Responsible Authorities” for alcohol premises not gambling.
- Local government have no control over lottery products
- Local government have some say over local advertising
- For these reasons, a public health response to gambling harms is proposed

Aim: to identify the levers and barriers to addressing gambling harms using public health approaches in London local government.

Mixed-methods

Multi-disciplinary

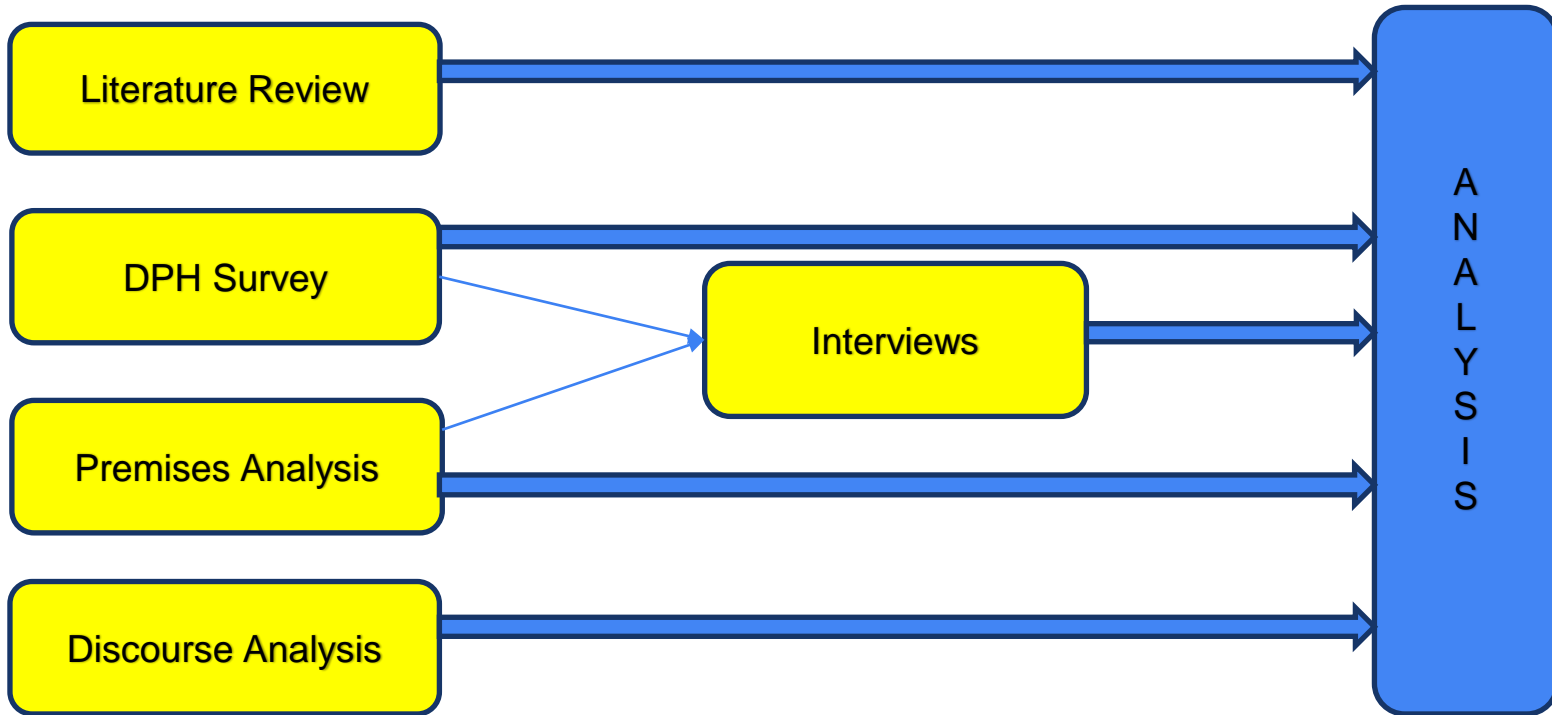


Research Objectives

1. Literature Review
2. DPH Survey
3. Premises analysis by borough
4. Discourse Analysis of gambling policy
5. Interviews with London local government public health & licensing teams
6. A mixed method analysis of above elements



Convergent parallel design with explanatory sequential element





Objective 1: Literature review

8 databases, 2 umbrella reviews, 1 book, 1 report

Nearly 1000 studies reviewed for suitability

19 in final review

Majority from pre-Covid and pre-online era

Various interventions

Poor design of interventions with exceptions

Interventions without evaluations

Funding not transparent



Output 2: DPH Survey

- Poor response (9/32) despite ADPH support
- Wide variation in PH team size (2-46)
- Only 50% think gambling harms are a public health issue
- Alignment with involvement in gambling licence and alcohol licensing
- Work with a large number of other teams in local government already

Output 3: Premises Data Analysis

- Data collected every 6 months of thesis
- Type, number, borough deprivation ranking Dec 2020 to Dec 2023
- Betting shops reducing overall BUT
- Betting shops increasing in deprived areas
- Premises concentrating into deprived areas
- Arcades and bingo going up



Sheffield Data

Date	TOTAL	LBO	AGC	Bingo	Casino	FEC
20-Dec	82	61	11	3	6	1
21-Dec	76	57	8	4	6	1
22-Dec	78	60	7	4	6	1
23-Dec	79	60	7	5	6	1
24-Dec	82	59	11	5	6	1

Output 4: Discourse Analysis - logics of critical explanation

- Critical Logics of Explanation - Glynos
- Social Logics- gambling is well legislated and legitimised.
- Political logics-local government is set in both conflict and collaboration with others. Gambling products are aligned or dichotomised
- Fantasmatic logics-freedom & fear
- Fantasmatic objects- FOBTs and the levy





Output 5: Interviews with PH and Licensing Teams

Reflective Thematic Analysis

1. Gambling is not just one thing (but they can all be harmful)
2. Feeling helpless (not enough power and not enough money)
3. Not really knowing
4. What Public health teams do (and how they do it)
5. Individuality: “my borough is different”



Output 6: Mixed Method Analysis

Levers and Barriers:

- A Tolerance of Harm
- Influence of the Gambling Industry
- Disempowerment of local government
- Heterogeneity (a lever and a barrier)

Retrodiction:

- Reinforce
- Moderate
- Counteract



Recommendations

- Having a Gambling Champion in PH team
- Conceptualising gambling harms as a PH issue
- Regional working
- Industry not stakeholders in policy
- Sharing good practice
- Premises data analysis
- Advertising Policies
- Regional legal approaches
- Clear Dols on LA investments

Thank you!

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<https://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2021/06/18/screening-for-gambling-harms-in-primary-care/>

Van Schalkwyk, M., Blythe J., McKee M., Petticrew M (2022). Gambling Act review- a test case for the UK government's commitment to public health. **BMJ** 2022;376:o248

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2023. <https://doi.org/10.29173/cgs165>

[LSHTM Research Online](#) link to published thesis

Thank You!