

Title: Feasibility of Text Messaging to Improve Continuous Tracking and Subject Retention for the National Children’s Study (NCS): Planning and Development

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Abstract

Introduction: Two critical recruitment and retention barriers for the NCS are: (1) tracking mobility of residents into and out of eligible dwelling units and segments to determine if eligibility status has changed, and (2) balancing the need to maintain contact with participants while avoiding participant dissatisfaction with multiple telephone contact attempts. Given the age range of eligible participants for the NCS, and the proportion of individuals in the U.S. population who use text messaging, evaluating the use of this relatively inexpensive technology to optimize recruitment, retention, and participant satisfaction is warranted.

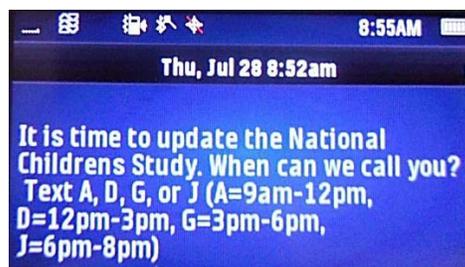
Methods: Four NCS locations are collaborating with SanTech, INC to plan, develop and implement a text messaging feasibility study. SanText™, a software program developed by SanTech, INC, will interface with local NCS case management systems to generate automated text messages to (1) identify changes in household composition or eligibility status; (2) assist with scheduling study visits; and (3) remind women in the late stage of pregnancy or their partners to contact their Study Center when they are going to deliver.

Results: English and Spanish text messages have been developed. SanText™ programming is complete with refinements expected during pre-testing. Development of tables and variables for communication between case management and SanText™ are in progress.

Conclusions: Recruitment and implementation of text messaging with eligible dwelling unit residents and study participants is anticipated for Fall of 2011. Participants will be followed for 6-9 months to determine the feasibility and acceptability of text messaging as a means of tracking and retaining NCS participants.

Tables, Graphs, Figures:

- Figure 1. Pictures of a cell phone with sample NCS text messages



• Figure 2. Text Messaging Flow Chart

