

**TEXTING REMINDER SERVICE
UPDATE ON PILOT IN PAEDIATRIC OUTPATIENTS**

DECEMBER 2007

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A pilot was approved to send text reminders of the date and time of appointment in Paediatric Outpatient departments.
- 1.2 Parents were asked for consent to text an appointment reminder for their next follow-up outpatient appointment. Text reminders were sent out one week before the appointment. A standard appointment template message was used – *‘Please remember your child’s appointment at Battledown Outpatients on ‘date’ and ‘time’. If you are unable to attend or require further information, please call 08454 224124’.*
- 1.3 Texts were sent as group messages, ie. one message could be sent to many contacts in one action.
- 1.4 On current text usage, one text message costs 9p to remind of an appointment. A follow up appointment in Paediatric medicine has an associated PbR income of £122, new appointment £239.

2. OUTCOMES

- 2.1 Appendix 1 includes an information analysis of texts sent and follow-up DNA rates in paediatric medicine at CGH.
- 2.2 Results indicate a reduction in follow-up DNA rates associated with an increase in texting reminders. Of note was the week beginning 1st October 2007 where, due to an error in the upload, text messages were not sent. In this week, the follow-up DNA rate increased to 27%.
- 2.3 Follow-up DNA rates in October dropped to a record low of 3% in one week.
- 2.4 A monthly summary at CGH in paediatric medicine shows a steady decrease in DNA rate:

<u>MONTH</u>	<u>FOLLOW-UP DNA RATE</u>
July 2007	18%
August 2007	17%
September 2007	14%
October 2007	15%
November 2007	11%

- 2.5 Cost YTD = £600 annual license fee (to run until May 2008), plus £29.25 in text message charges on small scale pilot. In November 2007 alone, reducing the follow up DNA rate from 18% to 11% - has released an additional capacity of 26 follow ups in the month at a related income of £3,172.
- 2.6 A feedback survey was coordinated by the PPI department – included as Appendix 2. The majority of respondents felt that the text reminder service was an excellent idea.

3. NEXT STEPS AND ISSUES

- 3.1** The pilot proceeded on an 'opt in basis' and mobile numbers were recorded on paper. This had a number of associated problems such as filing of paper records, recording of accurate appointment dates and times, problems with amendments if appointments were cancelled or change. This also meant that parents had to be asked to repeat this procedure for every attendance.
- 3.2** In order to roll out on a larger scale, this needs to proceed to an 'opt out' basis and the method to capture the mobile phone number and the decision to opt out needs to be electronic.
- 3.3** In consultation with Sue Dennis and Steve Edwards, the following has been agreed to proceed to an 'opt out' position':
- To inform and advise patients of the use of their mobile phone number for texting of reminders. To do this we will need to have posters and leaflets advising patients this is a method that we will be using increasingly more often unless they object. For new patients, we need a process to be able to inform them with the initial appointment, e.g. including a leaflet with the appointment letter.
 - It must be clear as to who they contact if they do not wish to be texted with an appointment. The suggestion is for this to be Sue Dennis as Caldicott Guardian.
 - We need to have a process to enable the mobile phone details and the decision to opt out to be recorded electronically. For this pilot to roll out on a larger scale, an electronic solution needs to be agreed.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1** The pilot has reduced the follow-up DNA rate in Paediatrics.
- 4.2** The patient feedback survey was very positive.
- 4.3** Other areas in the Trust have already expressed interest in roll out to their departments, e.g. Alison Anderson leading for Diabetes/Endocrinology and Bernie Turner for Theatres.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1** The texting company has expressed interest in sponsoring the production of posters and leaflets. This would be agreed in liaison with the PPI Department and is dependant on a suitably agreed IT solution.
- 5.2** Further work to be undertaken to agree options for an IT solution to record mobile phone numbers and electronic consent to ensure clear data links to appointment dates and times. Options currently being progressed via IT and Information Unit.

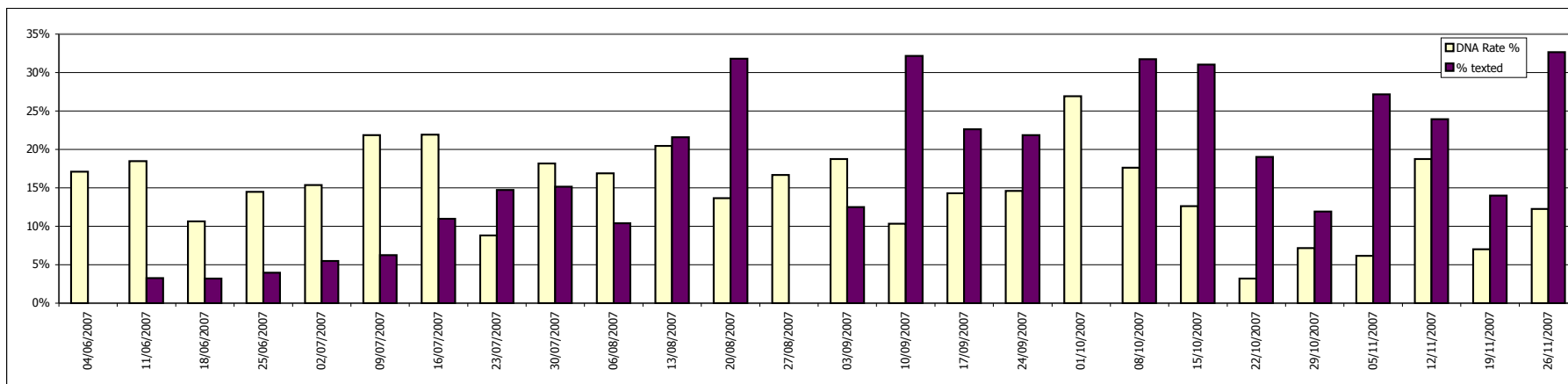
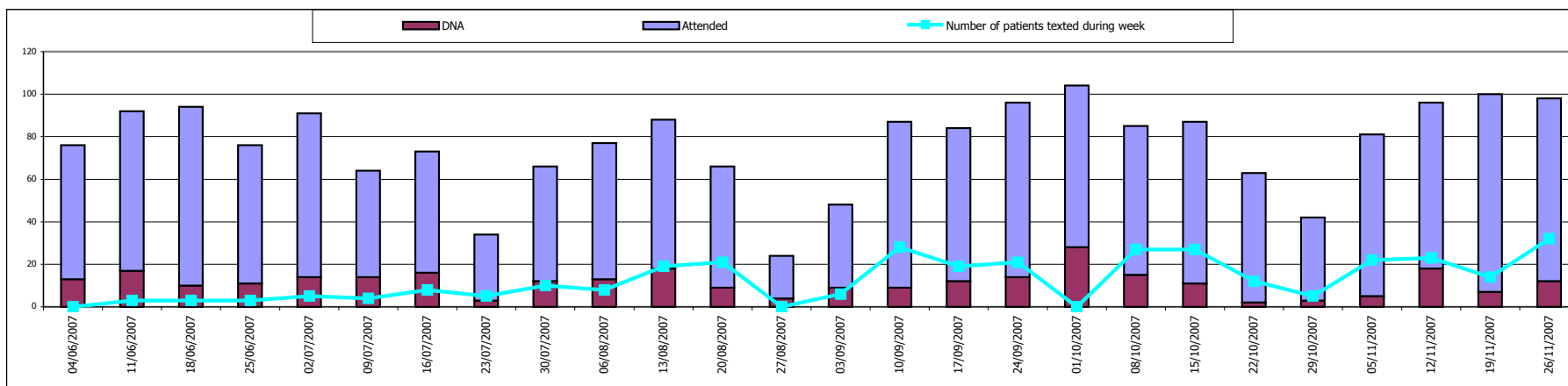
Paula Tambling
General Manager Women and Children Division
December 2007

Appendix 1
Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
Follow Up DNA rates at Cheltenham General Paediatric Outpatient Department

Source: tbl_op_2007 & tbl_op_2008

Cheltenham General

	Week commencing...																									
	04/06/2007	11/06/2007	18/06/2007	25/06/2007	02/07/2007	09/07/2007	16/07/2007	23/07/2007	30/07/2007	06/08/2007	13/08/2007	20/08/2007	27/08/2007	03/09/2007	10/09/2007	17/09/2007	24/09/2007	01/10/2007	08/10/2007	15/10/2007	22/10/2007	29/10/2007	05/11/2007	12/11/2007	19/11/2007	26/11/2007
Attended	63	75	84	65	77	50	57	31	54	64	70	57	20	39	78	72	82	76	70	76	61	39	76	78	93	86
DNA	13	17	10	11	14	14	16	3	12	13	18	9	4	9	9	12	14	28	15	11	2	3	5	18	7	12
DNA Rate %	17%	18%	11%	14%	15%	22%	22%	9%	18%	17%	20%	14%	17%	19%	10%	14%	15%	27%	18%	13%	3%	7%	6%	19%	7%	12%
Number of patients texted during week	0	3	3	3	5	4	8	5	10	8	19	21	0	6	28	19	21	0	27	27	12	5	22	23	14	32
% texted	0%	3%	3%	4%	5%	6%	11%	15%	15%	10%	22%	32%	0%	13%	32%	23%	22%	0%	32%	31%	19%	12%	27%	24%	14%	33%



Notes: w/c 01/10/2007 texts sent = 0 due to technical error with texting company

Text Reminder Project

Feedback Survey

November 2007

INTERIM REPORT

*Patient & Public Involvement Department
December 2007*

Text Reminder Project Feedback Survey 2007

Introduction

Battledown Outpatients Department are currently piloting a text message reminder project. The aim of this project is to reduce the number of patients who do not attend their appointment by sending a text message 1 week before a Childs appointment.

This survey was carried out to identify views of the Text Reminder Service – accuracy of text message, timing of text message, whether the text reminded them of appointment. Respondents were also given the opportunity to provide qualitative comments within the questionnaire regarding the service. 33 respondents who received a text message were asked to complete the survey over a three week period during November 2007. Respondents were given the option of returning the completed questionnaire in a collection box at reception or taking a prepaid envelope, for return to the Patient & Public Involvement Department.

Summary of Results

- 97% of respondents stated that the text message was sent to a mobile
- 91% of respondents stated that the text messaged reminded them of the appointment
- 97% of respondents did not need to rearrange the appointment
- 88% of respondents stated that the text message was sent at the right time
- 97% of respondents stated that the information in the text message was accurate

The majority of respondents felt that the text reminder service was an excellent idea that will help save money for the NHS.

The majority of respondents were white, female with a range of ages.

This report has been prepared by Amy Silk – Acting Patient & Public Involvement Co-ordinator

Appendix One – Patient Comments

33 comments were made

I think that the text message service is a really good idea for both patients and the hospital. Patients who are busy can forget appointments that have been made in advance. A weeks notice is enough time to rearrange any other events that may have cropped up in the meantime. Hospital – less missed appointments must save money! Any cancelled appointments then have time to be backfilled.
Excellent idea, most other services offer this facility e.g. dentists
Excellent idea to remind appt by text
Excellent idea, would help a lot
Had text for this appointment. Great as an reminder but felt it was sent a bit too early
Excellent idea – worked well
Excellent
Makes sure I remember, good idea
Good care
Excellent idea, though I always remember appointment it is good idea for those who forget! Help save money for NHS
Good idea excellent reminder
Great idea as will make me remember!
Good idea. Helps to remind you especially when appointments are made a long time in advance
I think it is an excellent idea. Fab reminder for busy mums and saves many missed appointments for the hospital
Excellent reminding service. Help me as I have tendency to forget when busy periods
Send message 2 or 3 days before appointment
Great
Very good service
Apparently the appointment had been changed – but TXT said original date and no letter had been sent re cancelled or changed appointment
I had already remembered the appt but text msg a really good idea
Excellent service
Excellent, very helpful
Good
Have had text message reminders in the past, but did not get a text for today's appointment
Good idea
Good idea
Excellent service
I think it is a brilliant and excellent idea
I think this will be a good idea. A good reminder
Good idea
I think it's a good idea
I think the text reminder service is a great idea. As I am a very busy person and occasionally have forgotten appointments
Yes because I have to ring and ask about appointments