

SMS Recruitment of Young People from General Practice – A Nested Cohort Study

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Background:

In general practice, recruitment of young people for research is challenging and very costly if conducted in person. We are using a remote strategy to recruit young people from practices enrolled in a randomised controlled trial investigating the effectiveness of a fee-for-service payment for an adolescent health check. Adolescents are asked to complete two online surveys over 12 months and can opt to provide consent for data linkage. Aiming to recruit 1000 participants from 44 Victorian general practices, we describe here the approach and results from the first two clinics.

Methods:

Patients aged 16-24 years who recently visited the clinic receive an SMS invitation to participate. Sent from the clinic via a third-party platform The SMS is sent from the clinic via a third-party platform (GoShare Healthcare by Healthily) and includes a personalised message and link to a REDCap survey. The SMS advises the survey is being conducted by the University of Melbourne, will take 20 minutes and they'll receive a \$30 gift card. The survey contains a short video about the study, a Plain Language Statement and participants consent using a digital signature. Participants are also invited to provide additional consent for data linkage (Medicare and PBS), receiving a further \$20 gift card. A reminder SMS is sent two days after their initial invitation.

Results:

Recruitment commenced late May 2024 and to date, a total of 563 patients from two clinics have been invited to participate: 130/563 (23%) participants clicked on the survey link and 67/130 (51%) completed the survey. Of these, 18/67 participants (27%) consented for data linkage. Participants are predominantly female (49/67, 73%), born in Australia (50/67, 75%), with a median age of 20 yrs (IQR: 18-22).

Conclusions:

Although early in recruitment, uptake from adolescents attending the first two clinics is promising. SMS recruitment could overcome time and the considerable financial barriers posed by in-person recruitment methods often utilised in general practice.

Disclosure of Interest Statement:

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