

# Timing of text message prompts to increase trial participant response to postal questionnaires in UK-FROST

<b>Submission date</b> 15/07/2016	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
<b>Registration date</b> 22/07/2016	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Last Edited</b> 12/08/2022	<b>Condition category</b> Musculoskeletal Diseases	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
		<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

In studies, an important and low cost way of getting health information directly from patients is to send questionnaires by post. However when these questionnaires are not completed and returned by patients, it can mean the study has less information than it needs to make useful and meaningful conclusions. It is important to find new ways to improve the return of postal questionnaires, and the best way of testing these strategies is in real life studies. Text messages are a simple, cheap and widely used form of communication. They have also been shown to improve the numbers of patients who take part in studies. However it is unclear when the most effective time to send a message for encouraging people to return postal questionnaires. The researchers for this study have recently done trials to compare the timing of text message reminders sent on the day the questionnaires were posted to patients (called 'pre-notification'); four days after questionnaires were sent (called 'post-notification'); or no text message reminders. The results did not reveal which was better, so it is important to get further evidence by doing more research to clarify previous findings.

### Who can participate?

Participants of the UK-FROST trial, which looks at the effectiveness of three treatments for frozen shoulder. More information for this study can be seen here: [ISRCTN48804508](https://doi.org/10.1186/ISRCTN48804508)

### What does the study involve?

All participants are sent a letter with a patient questionnaire 3 months after their participation in the UK FROST trial. Participants are randomly allocated to one of two groups. Those in group 1 receive text messages on the day the questionnaire is posted out, with the message "UK FROST Trial: You will receive a questionnaire in the post in a few days. Your answers are important; so please help by returning it as soon as you can. Thanks." Those in group 2 receive a text message 4 days after the questionnaire is posted out with the message "UK FROST Trial: You should have received a questionnaire in the post by now. Your answers are important; so please help by returning it as soon as you can. Thanks". Data is then collected as to how many participants

return a completed questionnaire, how long it takes them to complete the questionnaire and how many patients need to be sent at least one reminder before they send back the questionnaire.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?  
Not provided at time of registration.

Where is the study run from?  
The James Cook University Hospital (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?  
October 2014 to June 2019

Who is funding the study?  
Health Technology Assessment Programme (NIHR)

Who is the main contact?  
Dr Stephen Brealey  
stephen.brealey@york.ac.uk

## Contact information

**Type(s)**  
Scientific

**Contact name**  
Dr Stephen Brealey

**ORCID ID**  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9749-7014>

**Contact details**  
York Trials Unit  
Department of health Sciences, Faculty of Sciences  
ARRC Building, University of York  
York  
United Kingdom  
YO10 5DD  
01904321357  
stephen.brealey@york.ac.uk

## Additional identifiers

**Protocol serial number**  
HTA 13/26/01

## Study information

**Scientific Title**

Timing of text message prompts to increase trial participant response to postal questionnaires in UK-FROST: an embedded retention trial

### **Study objectives**

To evaluate whether SMS text messages sent as pre- or post-notification reminders improve questionnaire response rates in the United Kingdom Frozen Shoulder Trial (UK FROST) host-trial during the 3 month follow-up of participants.

### **Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

### **Ethics approval(s)**

North East (Newcastle & North Tyneside 2) Ethics Committee, 18/11/2014, ref: 14/NE/1176. Substantial Amendment 2 – REC gave favourable opinion for this text message study on 24/05/2016.

### **Study design**

Multi-centre randomised controlled trial

### **Primary study design**

Interventional

### **Study type(s)**

Other

### **Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Frozen shoulder (adhesive capsulitis)

### **Interventions**

Text messages will be sent in addition to the initial mailing out of a letter with the patient questionnaire at 3 months follow-up.

Intervention group: In the pre-notification group, text messages will be sent on the day the questionnaires are posted to participants. Content of the message will read: 'UK FROST Trial: You will receive a questionnaire in the post in a few days. Your answers are important; so please help by returning it as soon as you can. Thanks.'

Control group: In the post-notification group, messages will be sent four days after questionnaires are sent. 'UK FROST Trial: You should have received a questionnaire in the post by now. Your answers are important; so please help by returning it as soon as you can. Thanks'

### **Intervention Type**

Behavioural

### **Primary outcome(s)**

The proportion of participants who return a valid questionnaire at the three month follow-up.

We define a valid questionnaire as one containing a completed response for at least the primary outcome questionnaire (The Oxford Shoulder Score) at the three month follow-up.

### **Key secondary outcome(s)**

1. Time to questionnaire return (number of days between the questionnaire being mailed out to participants and it being recorded as returned)
2. The proportion of patients requiring at least one return reminder notice (a letter at 2 and 4 weeks and a telephone call 6 weeks following non--return)

### **Completion date**

30/06/2019

## **Eligibility**

### **Key inclusion criteria**

1. Participants enrolled into the UK FROST trial
2. Access to a mobile telephone
3. Provided consent to be contacted by text message

### **Participant type(s)**

Patient

### **Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

### **Age group**

Adult

### **Sex**

All

### **Total final enrolment**

269

### **Key exclusion criteria**

Patients not consenting to be contacted on their mobile telephone

### **Date of first enrolment**

18/07/2016

### **Date of final enrolment**

31/12/2017

## **Locations**

### **Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

### **Study participating centre**

**The James Cook University Hospital**  
United Kingdom  
Middlesbrough  
United Kingdom  
TS4 3RT

## Sponsor information

### Organisation

South Tees NHS Foundation Trust

### ROR

<https://ror.org/02js17r36>

## Funder(s)

### Funder type

Government

### Funder Name

Health Technology Assessment Programme

### Alternative Name(s)

NIHR Health Technology Assessment Programme, Health Technology Assessment (HTA), HTA

### Funding Body Type

Government organisation

### Funding Body Subtype

National government

### Location

United Kingdom

## Results and Publications

### Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

Not provided at time of registration

### IPD sharing plan summary

Available on request

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>	results	01/06/2020	02/06/2020	Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No
<a href="#">Protocol file</a>			12/08/2022	No	No