

# Boosting uptake of NHS Health Checks

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<b>Registration date</b> 08/04/2014	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 29/05/2020	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

The NHS Health Check is offered to 40-74 year olds in England who do not have an excluding medical condition. These 15 million patients are invited over a rolling five-year period i.e. one fifth per year. The programme is a policy priority for the Department of Health, NHS England and Public Health England and local authorities in their efforts to tackle premature mortality and promote healthy lifestyles. However, uptake rates are significantly lower than desired, at around 50 per cent. Local authority commissioners of the NHS Health Check currently use a range of different letters and marketing to invite the eligible population. It is not known which approach works better but making a change to the content of the invitation letter or a reminder text message may help change people's behaviour. The aim of this study is to determine the most effective patient invitation letter to maximise attendance of NHS Health Checks. The study will also consider other invitation or reminder methods, such as SMS messages and will test whether introducing a text message at the invitation stage changes levels of uptake.

### Who can participate?

People eligible for an NHS Health Check and resident in the London Borough of Southwark, London (UK).

### What does the study involve?

Participants are randomly allocated to receive the standard letter or one of the other letters (15 different combinations, for example with or without testimonials, with or without text reminders, etc).

### What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

There are no direct benefits. It is anticipated that participants will be more likely to attend their Health Check and therefore to receive any benefits associated with this NHS Health Check. There are no risks to participants. The standard NHS leaflet explaining the risks of attending a Health Check or not is included in both the standard and other letters.

### Where is the study run from?

GP practices in the London Borough of Southwark (UK)

### When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

November 2013 to April 2014

Who is funding the study?  
The Department of Health (UK)

Who is the main contact?  
Annabelle Bonus

## Contact information

**Type(s)**  
Scientific

**Contact name**  
Ms Annabelle Bonus

**Contact details**  
Wellington House, 133-135 Waterloo Road  
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## Additional identifiers

**EudraCT/CTIS number**

**IRAS number**  
138943

**ClinicalTrials.gov number**

**Secondary identifying numbers**  
IRAS project ID:138943

## Study information

**Scientific Title**  
Using behavioural insights to change uptake of the NHS Health Check

**Study objectives**  
Does making small, low-cost changes, based on behavioural insight, to the NHS Health Check invitation process change levels of uptake?

**Ethics approval required**  
Old ethics approval format

**Ethics approval(s)**  
NHS Health Research Authority NRES Committee, 23/09/2013, ref:13/SW/0293

**Study design**  
Multicentre factorial randomised controlled trial

## **Primary study design**

Interventional

## **Secondary study design**

Randomised controlled trial

## **Study setting(s)**

Other

## **Study type(s)**

Other

## **Participant information sheet**

Not available in web format, please use the contact details to request a patient information sheet

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

NHS Health Checks

## **Interventions**

The main aim of this trial is to investigate whether making small changes to the invitation letter for NHS Health Checks results in a difference in uptake.

The changes to the letters to be trialled include:

1. Control letter (the national template)
2. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip
3. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip and deadline
4. Short letter with social norms and testimonials

The impact of these letters will be tested against a control letter (the national template).

The new text messages to be trialled include:

1. Text message primer: patients receive a text message one week before the invitation letter telling them to expect the letter
2. Text message reminder: patients receive a text message one week after the invitation letter reminding them to respond to their letter.

The impact of these messages will be tested against the control of receiving no message.

This trial is a factorial design made up of three levels, all of which make up the initial invitation to a health check. We propose a 2 (Text primer: yes/no) x4 (Letter: Ctrl/social norms/open/closed) x2 (Text reminder: yes/no) between subjects factorial trial design.

1. Control letter (the national template), Text primer: Yes, Text reminder: Yes
2. Control letter (the national template), Text primer: Yes, Text reminder: No
3. Control letter (the national template), Text primer: No, Text reminder: Yes
4. Control letter (the national template), Text primer: No, Text reminder: No
5. Short letter with social norms and testimonials, Text primer: Yes, text reminder: Yes
6. Short letter with social norms and testimonials, Text primer: Yes, text reminder: No
7. Short letter with social norms and testimonials, Text primer: No, text reminder: Yes
8. Short letter with social norms and testimonials, Text primer: No, text reminder: No
9. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip, Text primer: Yes, text reminder: Yes
10. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip, Text primer: Yes, text reminder: No

- 11. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip, Text primer: No, text reminder: Yes
- 12. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip, Text primer: No, text reminder: No
- 13. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip and deadline, Text primer: Yes, text reminder: Yes
- 14. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip and deadline, Text primer: Yes, text reminder: No
- 15. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip and deadline, Text primer: No, text reminder: Yes
- 16. Short, letter with personalised tear off slip and deadline, Text primer: No, text reminder: No

**Intervention Type**

Other

**Phase**

Not Specified

**Primary outcome measure**

Attendance at an NHS Health Check. This will be measured against the control group. We will get interim results in March 2014 and the final results in June 2014. This data is captured anyway by the invitation letter provider.

**Secondary outcome measures**

No secondary outcome measures

**Overall study start date**

01/11/2013

**Completion date**

01/05/2014

## Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**

- 1. Any patient registered at a consenting GP practice in Southwark during the trial duration who is due to be invited for an NHS Health Check
- 2. Patients aged between 40-74 are invited to attend for a Health Check via an invitation letter sent to the address held in their medical records. Invitation letters and leaflets are sent on 24th of each month to the eligible population (starting on their 40th birthdays, and then every five years after that)

**Participant type(s)**

Patient

**Age group**

Mixed

**Sex**

Both

**Target number of participants**

8368

**Key exclusion criteria**

Participants will only be excluded if they are no longer eligible for an NHS Health Check at their GP's surgery, for example, if they have had one at a local pharmacy already

**Date of first enrolment**

01/11/2013

**Date of final enrolment**

01/05/2014

## **Locations**

**Countries of recruitment**

England

United Kingdom

**Study participating centre**

Department of Health

London

United Kingdom

SE1 8UG

## **Sponsor information**

**Organisation**

Department of Health (UK)

**Sponsor details**

c/o Tabitha Brufal

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**Sponsor type**

Government

**ROR**

<https://ror.org/03sbpja79>

## **Funder(s)**

**Funder type**

Government

**Funder Name**

Department of Health (UK)

## Results and Publications

**Publication and dissemination plan**

Not provided at time of registration

**Intention to publish date****Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan****IPD sharing plan summary**

Not provided at time of registration

**Study outputs**

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>	results	22/08/2019	29/05/2020	Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No