

# Boosting uptake of NHS Health Checks in Northamptonshire

<b>Submission date</b> 28/03/2014	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 25/06/2014	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 17/12/2019	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

The NHS Health Check programme has been set up to help prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and some types of dementia in the general population. Everyone aged 40 to 74 and not either already diagnosed with one of these conditions, or have certain risk factors, will be sent an invite once every 5 years to attend an appointment to check on their risk of developing these diseases. They will be then given support or advice on how to manage or reduce such risks. The programme is a policy priority for the Department of Health, NHS England, Public Health England and local authorities in their efforts to tackle premature death and promote healthy lifestyles. However, the number of people who join the programme 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 encourage those eligible to attend. However, there has not to date been any robust research into what type of letters or marketing strategies will be most likely to lead to an increase in the number of people taking part in the programme. There is compelling evidence in the field of behavioural science to suggest that a low cost intervention within the content of the invitation letter or a reminder text message may be effective at changing peoples behaviour. The aim of this study is to determine what type of patient invitation letter would be most likely to successfully encourage people to enrol on the NHS Health Check programme. The results will be used to help promote the uptake of Health Checks.

### Who can participate?

People eligible for an NHS Health Check in the Borough of Northamptonshire during the duration of the study

### What does the study involve?

This study tests whether a number of small, low-cost changes to the invitation process for Health Checks can increase uptake. Patients are randomly allocated to receive the usual letter of invitation (control), a new, shorter, action focused letter containing some questions and answers relating to the Health Check (intervention 1), or a shorter letter with a reference to the cost of the Health Check appointment (intervention 2).

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

There are no risks to participants. The standard NHS leaflet explaining the risks of attending a Health Check, or not, is including in both the control and intervention letters.

Where is the study run from?

GP surgeries in Northamptonshire (UK)

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

March 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

Richmond House

79 Whitehall

London

United Kingdom

SW1A 2NS

## Additional identifiers

EudraCT/CTIS number

IRAS number

ClinicalTrials.gov number

Secondary identifying numbers

N/A

## 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 randomised controlled trial

**Primary study design**

Interventional

**Secondary study design**

Randomised controlled trial

**Study setting(s)**

GP practice

**Study type(s)**

Other

**Participant information sheet**

No participant information sheet available

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

NHS Health Checks

**Interventions**

Patients in participating practices who are due to be invited to a health check are randomly allocated into one of three groups. This is a simple randomization done locally by each practice once a month. The letter variations should include:

1. National template (control)
2. A shorter letter containing some questions and answers relating to the Health Check
3. A shorter letter with a reference to the cost of the Health Check appointment

**Intervention Type**

Other

**Phase**

Not Applicable

**Primary outcome measure**

Uptake of the NHS Health Check. This is recorded by the local IT system EmisWeb. This is recorded once the appointment is attended, and the data provided for analysis six months after the invitation letters are sent.

**Secondary outcome measures**

Not provided at time of registration

**Overall study start date**

01/03/2014

**Completion date**

30/04/2015

## Eligibility

**Key inclusion criteria**

Any patient registered at a consenting participating GP practice in Northamptonshire during the trial duration who is due to be invited for an NHS Health Check. 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. The letters are sent monthly by the individual GP practices.

**Participant type(s)**

Patient

**Age group**

Adult

**Sex**

Both

**Target number of participants**

6000

**Total final enrolment**

6331

**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**

01/03/2014

**Date of final enrolment**

30/04/2015

## Locations

**Countries of recruitment**

England

United Kingdom

**Study participating centre**

Department of Health

London

United Kingdom  
SW1A 2NS

## Sponsor information

### Organisation

Department of Health (UK)

### Sponsor details

c/o Tabitha Brufal  
Richmond House  
79 Whitehall  
London  
United Kingdom  
SW1A 2NS

### 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	16/12/2019	17/12/2019	Yes	No
<a href="#">HRA research summary</a>			28/06/2023	No	No