



Creating an Effective Vaccination Reminder Program



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Vaccinations save lives and yield positive economic results. It is estimated that vaccinations prevent 14 million disease episodes and more than 33,000 deaths per year. Further, vaccines offset an estimated \$43 billion dollars that would otherwise be spent on managing chronic and recurring, curable illness.



 **14M** disease episodes avoided

 **33,000** lives saved

 **\$43B** in healthcare savings

Learn why reminder systems are a critical step for achieving patient engagement and uptake goals associated with vaccine education and coverage broadcasts.

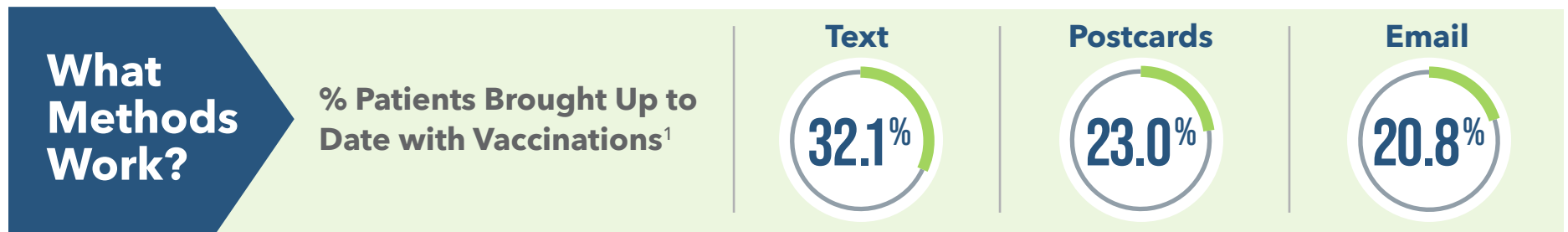
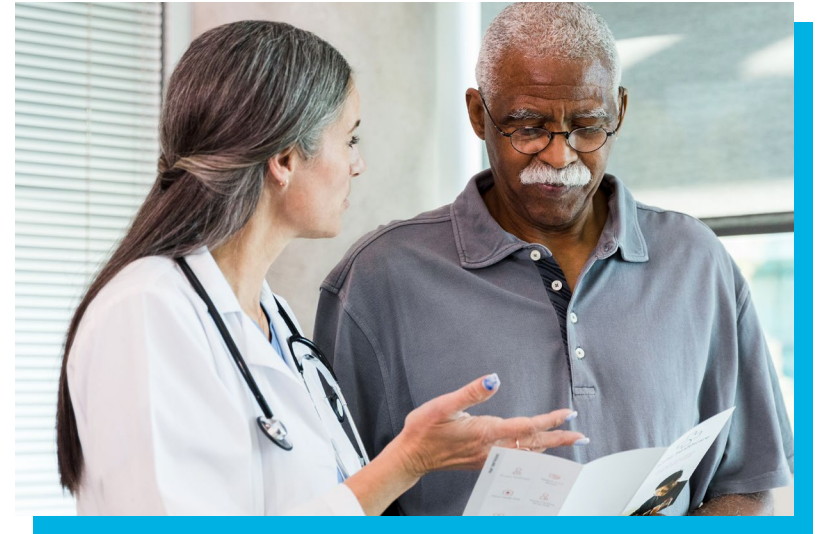
- Trends in Vaccine Uptake
- How to Get Patients to Vaccinate
- Best Practices for Vaccine Outreach & Appointment Reminders
 - ROI: Benefits of the 2-Step Strategy

Trends in Vaccine Uptake

While vaccine participation is generally high in the US, uptake of vaccines dwindles as children enter their teenage years. This is especially true for multi-dose vaccinations, where missed doses can result in lower disease protection levels. When teens and adults opt-out of vaccinations, the impact may begin at home with callouts to work and school. However, the spread of illness and subsequent healthcare and economic impacts increase with extended community exposure.

Getting Patients to Vaccinate

Using reminder systems as a follow-up to vaccine education and coverage broadcasts positively impacts patient engagement and vaccine uptake. These reminder programs can be as simple as a phone call, text or postcard. However, the results of independent studies^{1,2} reveal how best to optimize outreach in order to achieve the highest compliance rates, revenue and return on investment.



While a reminder of any form (text, email, phone, or postcard) will increase vaccinations, multiple touchpoints are most effective. Further, more “permanent” forms of reminders are preferred by patients. These are reminders that can be easily retained and referred to later, such as texts and postcards. It is important to understand that not all communication methods are equally effective, especially when used independently.

Odds of becoming up-to-date for all recommended vaccinations¹

Intervention groups versus Control

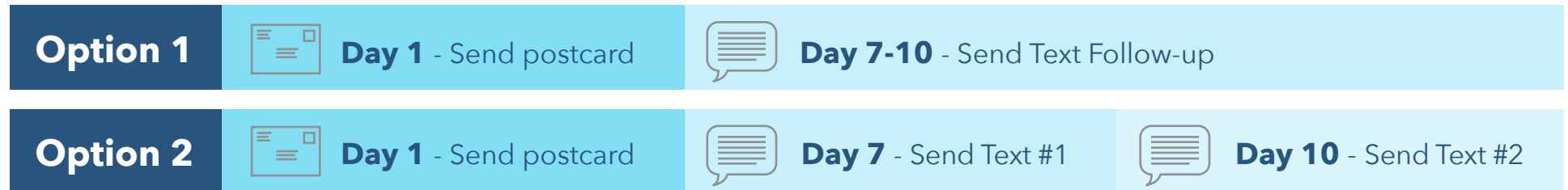
 **Email** - 2.4 times more likely  **Postcard** - 3.1  **Text** - 4.4

2 Steps to More Effective Vaccine Outreach

The most effective patient engagement programs use the top performing communication channels to increase vaccination awareness and uptake.

What is the recommended course of action? It is recommended that healthcare entities combine postcards and text messages as reminders to vaccinate. This two-step approach leverages channels that generate high receipt and read rates.

Healthcare institutions with the greatest success send the postcard first and follow up with a text message reminder seven to ten days later. Here are two options worth considering:



When sending the follow-up text for scheduling a vaccination, include a closed-loop appointment setting option when you can. Feedback from patients reveals that they appreciate the convenience of being able to schedule a vaccine appointment directly via text messaging.

Best Practices of 2-Step Vaccine Outreach

Communicate Benefits:

Deploy messaging that communicates the importance of the specific vaccine.

Sample message: *Flu is typically mild. However, nearly 20,000 children are hospitalized every year with the flu. Keep your family healthy by scheduling your flu shot today.*

Increase Awareness:

Re-engage with messaging that communicates the importance of the specific vaccine.

Sample message: *As a reminder, our records show you may be missing an important CDC recommended vaccine. Would you like more information on the recommended vaccine? Please reply "1" for "YES", or "2" to decline.*

Make Scheduling Easy:

Give patients the option of scheduling their appointment in real-time.

Sample message: *You are due for a routine vaccination. Please reply "1" to schedule your appointment, or "2" to decline.*

Appointment Reminders

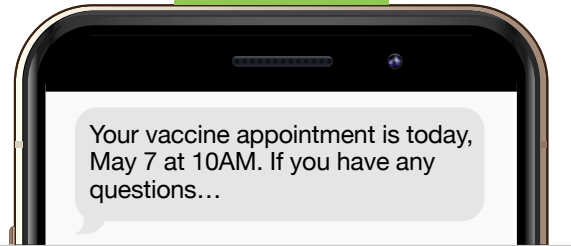
The Journal of Adolescent Health published an article supporting the effectiveness of a two-step approach for appointment reminders: "The most effective reminder strategy for improving kept-appointment rates was a combined telephone and postcard reminder..."²


While patient preferences have since evolved, the importance of delivering multiple touchpoints remains the same. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that as adolescents enter adulthood, engaging them within their primary communication channels is proving effective for continuity of care, including maintaining up-to-date vaccinations. A series of text messages has shown effective for curtailing no-shows among young-adult and adult patients.


Reminder #1



Reminder #2

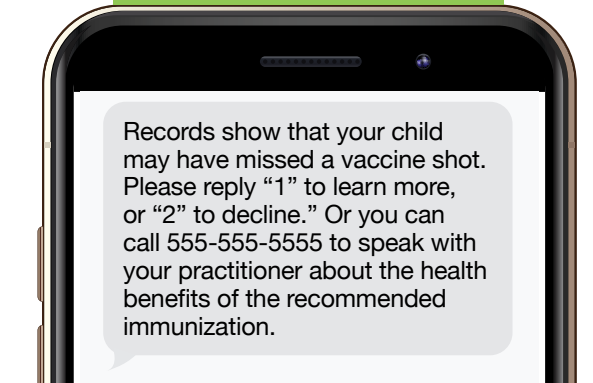


 **Two days prior** - Send text message

 **Day of appointment** - Send text message

Test messages and post cards can also assist when re-engaging families that have previously missed a recommended vaccine:

Missed Vaccine Message #1



Return Investment

A study from the “Prevention in Pediatric Care” found the two-touch strategy yields the highest kept-appointment rate. Also, this strategy was shown to yield the greatest revenue, with an estimated return of \$7.28 for every dollar invested (assuming a \$100 reimbursement rate for a provider).¹



Benefits of the 2-Step Vaccine Engagement Strategy

- An Estimated return of \$7.28 for every dollar invested.
- Engages the patient in their preferred channels.
- Healthcare providers can leverage vaccination registries to identify eligible patients, closing care gaps and increasing revenue.

One should consider following best practices to avoid conflict or confusion relating to remuneration to healthcare providers.

Stay generic – Do not recommend a specific product, course of vaccination, or specific health care provider. Instead, use generic language like “Records show that your child may have missed a vaccine shot. Please contact your child’s doctor or health clinic to find out if you need to schedule an appointment.”

Offer service to all clients - The program should be offered to all health insurers and health care entities without any consideration of overall volume or value of expected or past referrals of the Pharmaceutical company’s products.

No incentives – There will be no coupons, offers of free items given by the Pharmaceutical company to the healthcare entity, nor patient, in exchange for receiving the vaccine.

Be transparent – All communications should disclose financial support and that no patient- specific information is provided to the Pharmaceutical company.

No Patient Data – Patient-specific data used to make an outreach should flow directly from the healthcare provider to Intrado*.

Honor Opt-Outs – Patients who wish to opt-out from vaccine reminder communications should have that request honored.

Vaccination Registry - Healthcare providers can leverage vaccination registries to identify eligible patients.

Using clean data – Performance improves when the data used for outreach is complete and accurate. This is accomplished by improving internal data collection processes and by using services that “append” missing data, such as full street addresses or zip codes. Clean data ensures that the greatest number of patients will receive the reminder message(s).

*The OIG Advisory Opinion No. 11-07 outlines the Office of Inspector General’s position that, based on the program limitations outlined in the Opinion, vaccine reminder programs “do not constitute grounds for the imposition of civil monetary penalties...or administrative sanctions” under the Federal anti-kickback statute.

Sources:

1. Irigoyen, M., Findley, S, Earle, B, Stambaugh, K, Vaughan, R. Impact of appointment reminders on vaccination coverage at an Urban Clinic. Pediatrics Oct 2000, 106 (Supplement 3) 919-923;
2. Morris J, Wang W, Wang L, Peddecord KM, Sawyer MH. Comparison of reminder methods in selected adolescents with records in an immunization registry. J Adolesc Health. 2015 May;56(5 Suppl):S27-32. doi: 10.1016/j.jadohealth.2015.01.010. PMID: 25863551.
3. Graham, C. Study: how patients want to communicate with their physician. Technology Advice. August 13,2014. <https://technologyadvice.com/blog/healthcare/study-patient-portal-communication-2014/>

