

11 June 2015

Dear Doctor

Text Messaging Guidance for QOF purposes

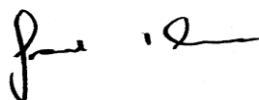
You have recently been informed by NHS Wales Informatics Services (NWIS) of new functionality in relation to text messaging via the clinical system. This new functionality for text messaging, which is part of wider IT developments and solutions for improving access to general medical services, seeks to deliver a number of benefits, including a reduction in DNA rates, together with a reduction in staff time against contacting patients via the telephone. This functionality is being provided free of charge to the practice.

Text messaging can now be used for appointment reminders, and to support the call / recall processes for seasonal flu, QOF and other chronic disease management purposes.

This letter provides guidance for the use of text messaging for the purposes of QOF invites. The use of text messaging for QOF purposes is voluntary. Where a GP practice elects to use text messaging, a letter must be sent to patients on the relevant QOF register inviting them to make an appointment. The QOF invite letter should make it clear that patients who do not wish to receive future QOF invites by text messaging may opt out and continue to receive QOF invites by written letter. The letter should also make it clear if a patient elects to opt out of text message for QOF invites, the patient opts out of the whole text messaging service. Except for those patients who have indicated their preference to opt out of future text messaging, text messaging may be used for second and subsequent QOF invites. It is suggested the text message must not contain any patient identifiable information. NWIS has also confirmed the text software automatically flags any non-delivery of text messages.

Also, on the basis of implied consent (where a patient has not indicated a preference to opt out for QOF invite or where a patient has already provided a mobile phone number as means of contact) text messaging may also be used for appointment reminders to support the call/ recall process for seasonal flu and other chronic conditions.

Yours sincerely



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