The Value of Personal Reminders
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Methods

• Outpatient non-attendance, or no-shows, produce major consequences for both patients and providers. 
• A recent review of 42 studies found that telephone reminders, which are mostly automated, were the most effective system to reduce no-shows (9.4% reduction).
• Our Internal Medicine Clinic continues to have high no-show rates (27.1%) despite automated reminders.
• We sought to understand the impact personal phone reminders by staff may have on no-show rates vs automated reminders.
• We were particularly interested in evaluating whether PGY1 no-show rates were impacted at the beginning of their training.

Background

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• A recent review of 42 studies found that telephone reminders, which are mostly automated, were the most effective system to reduce no-shows (9.4% reduction).
• Our Internal Medicine Clinic continues to have high no-show rates (27.1%) despite automated reminders.
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Results

• 4,121 scheduled clinic visits from 6/22/15 - 10/31/15 were analyzed
• 1,067 (25.9%) no-shows occurred over this 4 month period
• The mean average scheduled visits per resident was 72.4 for firm A and 75.0 for firm Z which was similar (p=.7188).
• The average rate of cancelation per resident was also similar in both firms (A=22.2%, Z=29.3%, p=.0324).
• The average rate of clinic visits was higher for firm A (A=55.6%, Z = 50.7%, p = 0.0421).

• Mean Averages Clinic Encounters Per Resident from 6/22/15 - 10/31/15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scheduled visits</th>
<th>No-Show</th>
<th>Cancellation</th>
<th>Actual Visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Firm A</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Firm Z</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean average no-shows were significantly less in Firm A.

Conclusions

• Personalized reminders may have resulted in significantly less no-shows.
• Despite the cheaper and convenient alternative of automated telephone reminders, personalized reminders can reduce no-shows and lead to more efficient care and better outpatient training.
• Personalized reminders can also increase initial R1 clinic visits and subsequent continuity experience.
• Lack of statistical significance for R1 data from our review may be from small sample size (firm A n=10, Z n=10).

Sources