NHS Health Checks – 23 Nov 2015

Behavioural Insights Projects

Karen Tan – PHE Behavioural Insights Researcher
Dr Tim Chadborn – PHE Behavioural Insights Lead Researcher
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Utilising insights from research in behavioural economics and psychology to improve public health outcomes

**Why?**

- Behaviour underpins the effectiveness of health interventions
- Behaviours often complex and not predictable at individual level. We are influenced by context

**How?**

- Demonstrate how behavioural insights can improve public health outcomes and sharing of evidence:
  - Design with potential to scale up with low resources.
  - Robust testing of intervention. Avoid self-reported outcomes (if possible)
Overview:
- PHE and Department of Health Behavioural Insights Teams partner with local governments, third sector and private sector organisations
- Design, deliver, evaluate and fund collaborative projects
- Develop low cost approaches to improve behavioural outcomes

NHS Health Checks:
- Majority of those eligible for an NHS HC are still invited by letters
- We want to enhance these letters,
  - wide reach
  - low costs
  - local setting
  - quickly scalable
1. Medway Letters (Results Available)
2. Southwark Letters (Results Available)
4. Northamptonshire Letters (Jan 2016)
5. Stoke on Trent Letters (Mid 2016)
6. Bristol (Dec 2015)
7. Salford Videos on GP waiting room screens (Results Available)
8. Southwark GP Prompts (Dec 2015)
DH/Medway Letter Trial

Dear [Name],

You are due to attend your NHS Health Check. Please call us on 0307 222 5555 to book your appointment and record the date and time on the slip below.

Take a look at the enclosed information about the NHS Health Check and how it would benefit you.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

My NHS Health Check is at _______ on _______ at _______

- Simpler
- More direct and action-orientated
- Tear-off slip to increase commitment
1. Small changes to invitation letters and text messages can increase NHS Health Check uptake

2. Changes to text messages could effect NHS Health Check Uptake (March 2016)
People were randomised to receive one of 4 letters:

1. Original letter as control
2. Personalised commitment
3. Deadline commitment
4. Testimonials
People were randomised to be in one of 4 text message conditions:

1. No text message
2. Primer and reminder
3. Primer only
4. Reminder only

Primer: One week before letter

<Practicename>: Dear <firstname2>, your NHS Health Check is due at your GP practice. We will post you a letter soon with info about how to book your appt.

Reminder: One week after letter

<Practicename>: Dear <firstname2>, Your GP recently sent you a letter inviting you to attend your NHS Health Check. Call xxxxxxxxx to book an appt.
Overall Results

- Standard letter, no texts: 18%
- Deadline commitment letter, no texts: 21%
- Deadline commitment letter AND P and R text: 30%
- Deadline commitment letter AND R text only: 27%
2. Southwark Text Messages

Small changes to text messages could effect NHS Health Check Uptake

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- Loss aversion: NHS HC is valued at £xx
- Social norms: ‘xxxx adults in Southwark like you attended theirs [NHS HC appointment]’

Results:
- Will be presented at the NHS HC Conference 1 March 2015
Small changes to letters could impact the uptake of NHS Health Checks
Northamptonshire Letters

6000 members of the eligible population from GP practices randomised into one of three letters (1 control, 2 intervention) inviting them to an NHS Health Check

- Shorter letters – reduced cognitive effort

**Intervention 1: Myth Busting**

**Excuse:** I don’t want to bother the NHS

**Your GP says:** I want you to attend the NHS Health Check, as it can help prevent you developing more serious conditions which will take up more NHS resources.

**Intervention 2: Costs**

The NHS Health Check is important. Your GP has already set aside funding to pay for your appointment. Please take the time to attend.

**Messenger Effect:** influenced by communicator of information

**Loss Aversion:** Focus is on the potential loss associated with the lack of action.
Communicating CVD risk score to increase uptake of NHS Health Checks (Results Mid 2016)
Stoke on Trent Communicating CVD risk score

Randomised control trial of the traditional letter compared to a CVD risk tailored letter

Your NHS Health Check is now due.

According to the available information that we hold about your health and lifestyle, you appear to have an increased risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes, kidney disease and certain types of dementia, risk which we can help reduce.

...out of 100 people like you, we would expect [personalised risk score] to have a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years.

Deadlines: ‘Due’
Defaults: Wording suggests having a HC is the default option

Salience: Risk is highlighted to individual.
Personalisation: Messaged is tailored to individual with their CVD risk score (example on right is for high risk individual)

Relative ranking: Compared to others, risk of having a heart attack/stroke is made clear.
Evaluation of a telephone outreach service to enhance uptake of NHS Health Checks
Bristol Telephone Outreach

Quasi experimental approach to determine effectiveness of telephone outreach on the uptake of NHS HCs in Bristol compared to a traditional invitation letter.

- **Network Nudge**: Community workers make the calls
- **Personalisation**: Call directly to individual eligible for NHS HC

**Results:**

- Expected beginning of December 2015
Salford City Council

NHS HC promotion video on GP Surgery Waiting Room Screens
Salford GP Screens

Purpose: Quasi-experimental study to test the effectiveness of videos on GP surgery waiting room screens to increase the uptake of NHS Health Checks.

- **Salience**: Novelty of NHS HC information on the GP television screen

- **Timeliness**: Prompt while waiting, have the capacity and access to book an appointment for an NHS HC.

- **Network nudge**: We are influenced by the behaviour people who are similar to us.
**Results**: From the analysis of the data, the Salford NHS HC promotion video played on the GP waiting room screens had no impact on the uptake of NHS HC in Salford.
3. Prompts on GP screens for staff to invite patients to attend an NHS Health Check
Southwark Prompts

Randomised control trial of automated prompts from GP IT systems to Health care staff as a means of increasing uptake of NHS Health Checks.

- **Salience** – *visual reminder to offer the NHS HC*
- **Urgency** – *‘Due’*
- **Timeliness** – *Reminder during staff/patient interaction*

Results:
- Currently under analysis

Please offer the patient an appointment for their free NHS Health Check
Bromley: Using Heart Age to boost uptake with the deprived & hard to reach

Heart Age increased uptake in the most deprived groups

- Personalised: CVD risk is made personally relevant.
- Motivates action
- Personalised programme of support to help people reduce their heart age

Source: 13 Oct 2015 Bromley Heart Age webinar

http://www.healthcheck.nhs.uk/commissioners_and_healthcare_professionals/national_resources_and_training_development_tools/webinars/past_webinars/
Thank You!

Karen Tan
Karen.Tan@phe.gov.uk