Automated Telephone Reminders: A Tool to Help Refill Medicines On Time

Prepared for:
Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
540 Gaither Road
Rockville, MD 20850
www.ahrq.gov

Contract No. 290-00-0011

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Citation: Jacobson KL, Kripalani S, Gazmararian JA, McMorris KJ. Automated Telephone Reminders: A Tool to Health Refill Medicine On Time. (Prepared under contract No. 290-00-0011 T07.) AHRQ Publication No. 08-M017-EF. Rockville, MD: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. February 2008.

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Non-Adherence to Prescription Medications is a Documented Public Health Problem

- Only 50-60 percent of patients are adherent in taking prescribed medicines over a one-year period.[1-3]
- Non-adherence is particularly concerning in patient populations with a high prevalence of chronic conditions.
- Medication non-adherence costs an estimated $100 billion annually in the United States and accounts for 10 percent of hospital admissions.[3]

Telephone Reminders to Refill or Pick Up Prescriptions Improve Medication Adherence[4-6]

- Automated telephone reminder systems call patients to remind them to refill their prescriptions and allow patients to order the refill on the phone. However, these systems can be difficult for patients with limited health literacy to use.
- This literacy-friendly telephone script is provided for use by pharmacies wishing to provide automated refill reminder calls to patients.
- To deliver automated telephone reminder calls, your organization should work with a software vendor to develop a call flow process and implement the technology.

[1] Haynes RB, Taylor DW, Sackett DL, eds. Compliance in Health Care. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins; 1979.
[2] McDonald HP, Garg AX, Haynes RB. Interventions to enhance patient adherence to medication prescriptions: scientific review. JAMA 2002;288:2868-2879.
[3] Vermeire E, Hearnshaw H, Van Royen P, Denekens J. Patient adherence to treatment: three decades of research. A comprehensive review. J Clin Pharm Ther 2003;26:331-342.
[4] Ascione FJ, Brown GH, Kirking DM. Evaluation of a medication refill reminder system for a community pharmacy. Pt Educ & Couns. Jun 1985;7(2):157-165.
[5] Davis KC, Kennedy DT, Holdford D, Small RE. Evaluation of patient adherence from a telephone intervention program in community pharmacy practice. Virginia Pharm. 2000;84(Nov):23-27.
[6] Simkins CV, Wenzloff NJ. Evaluation of a computerized reminder system in the enhancement of patient medication refill compliance. Drug Intell & Clin Pharm. 1986;20(Oct):799-802.

Automated Telephone Reminder Call Script

➢ *System places outgoing call.*

➢ *Call answered (by person or answering machine).*

➢ "Hello. This is the _____ pharmacy calling. Our records show that a person at this telephone number is due for a prescription order refill. To refill this order,now, please press (*1*). Or you may call the pharmacy back later at _____."

  o *(1) is pressed to continue order:*

➢ "The prescription order is for a person at this telephone number who was born in the month of <October>. For security purposes, please enter the 2-digit birth day for this patient. For example, if the birth day is on the 2nd, please enter the numbers 0, 2 now."

➢ ***Birth date is valid/correct:***

  o "Our records show that <*x*> prescriptions are due to be refilled. If you would like to refill all <*x*> prescriptions now, press (1). If you know the prescription numbers you want refilled and would rather enter them yourself, press (2).

    ▪ *(1) is pressed:*

      ◇ "Thank you. Your order is being processed. Please allow 48 hours to process your order, and be sure to go to the _____ pharmacy that is located at the address on each prescription label. If you have a question or would like to speak with someone in the pharmacy, please call _____. Thank you, goodbye."

    ▪ *(2) is pressed:*

      ◇ "Using your touch-tone phone, please enter your <*x*> digit prescription number now."

      ◇ "If you have another prescription number to enter, press (1). If you do not have another prescription number to enter, press (2)."

        o *(1) is pressed:*

- "Using your touch-tone phone, please enter your <x> digit prescription number now."

  o *(2) is pressed:*

  - "Thank you. Your order is being processed. Please allow 48 hours to process your order, and be sure to go to the _____ pharmacy that is located at the address on each prescription label. If you have a question or would like to speak with someone in the pharmacy, please call _____. Thank you, goodbye."

➢ *Birth date is not valid/correct:*

  o "I'm sorry, the birth day you entered is not correct. If you would like to re-enter the birth day, press (1). If not, press (2)."

    ▪ *(2) is pressed:*

      ✧ "If you would like to speak with someone in the pharmacy, press (1). Or, please call the pharmacy back later at _____."