SWAT 91: Using theory-based enhancements to improve engagement with trial participant newsletters

Objective of this SWAT
To evaluate the impact of theory-based enhancements to an emailed participant newsletter on participants' engagement with the newsletter.

Study area: Retention
Sample type: Participants
Estimated funding level needed: Unfunded

Background
Participant newsletters are commonly used to maintain participant engagement and boost retention in clinical trials. However, there is little evidence to guide this trial activity, and this SWAT assesses whether an approach based on theories of persuasion and motivation improves newsletter engagement. It uses a 2x2x2 factorial design to test three interventions: (a) subject line (standard wording or enhanced, competency-based wording); (b) sender (trial name or site nurse's name); and (c) salutation line (no salutation or personalised salutation).

Interventions and comparators
Intervention 1: subject line (standard wording), sender (trial name); and salutation line (no salutation)
Intervention 2: subject line (standard wording), sender (trial name), salutation line (personalised salutation)
Intervention 3: subject line (standard wording), sender (site nurse's name), salutation line (no salutation)
Intervention 4: subject line (standard wording), sender (site nurse's name), salutation line (personalised salutation)
Intervention 5: subject line (enhanced, competency-based wording), sender (trial name), salutation line (no salutation)
Intervention 6: subject line (enhanced, competency-based wording), sender (trial name), salutation line (personalised salutation)
Intervention 7: subject line (enhanced, competency-based wording), sender (site nurse's name), salutation line (no salutation)
Intervention 8: subject line (enhanced, competency-based wording), sender (site nurse's name), salutation line (personalised salutation)

Index Type: Method of Follow-up

Method for allocating to intervention or comparator
Randomisation

Outcome measures
Primary: Open rate (proportion of recipients who opened the newsletter within two weeks of mail out).
Secondary: Click rate (proportion of recipients who clicked on at least one link within the newsletter within two weeks of mail out).

Analysis plans
When this SWAT was implemented, logistic mixed-effects regression analyses were done. The three-way interaction was tested and backward stepwise elimination was performed to identify the optimal model. No multiple test adjustments will be made because this is an exploratory analysis, with significance being set at 0.05.

Possible problems in implementing this SWAT
Randomisation and data collection are managed within a third-party, online, email marketing service.

References

Publications or presentations of this SWAT design

Examples of the implementation of this SWAT

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