

Evidence for Change



Evidence for Change provides a quick, evidence-based overview of key behavioral science research that Atlantis Health applies in support of patients to achieve optimal health outcomes.

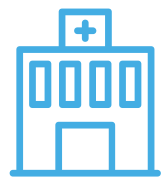


Dr. Kate Perry is trained as a Health and Clinical Psychologist. As Group Health Psychology Lead at Atlantis Health, Kate oversees the integration of evidence from the behavioral sciences into innovative health behavior solutions that empower people living with long-term conditions to **Change for Good**.

Research selected

“It’s how you say it: Systematic A/B testing of digital messaging cut hospital no-show rates.”

[by Adi Berliner Senderey, et al., in Public Library of Science \(PLOS\) One.](#)



Relevance today

Challenge: Failure to attend healthcare appointments (for example, health screenings, routine health appointments, vaccinations) is a common global problem. Studies report **outpatient clinic appointment no-show rates of up to 43%**, and no-show rates to health screening or preventive health appointments can be even higher. Failure to attend has health implications for the patient, and quality of care and cost implications for the healthcare system. SMS text reminders are frequently used to remind patients of upcoming appointments. Research demonstrates that reminder messages are only somewhat effective. **The problem with straightforward reminders is that they do not address barriers to attendance beyond forgetting** and as such they fail to motivate patients to attend.

What the research tells you

This research **leverages behavioral economic principles** to develop a series of appointment reminders that **tap into different motivational narratives**, such as empathy and opportunity cost. Using the primary endpoint of appointment attendance, the research tested the effectiveness of nine different motivational messages. **Messages designed to evoke emotional guilt and messages specifying the cost of a missed appointment were the most effective** when compared with the control. The research demonstrates that messages addressing these motivations reduced clinic no-show rates by over 30%.

▶ Reduced clinic no-show rates by over **30%**

Applying the research to your work

Reminders are not enough to drive appointment attendance, especially if forgetting is not the main barrier to attendance. The key to driving any behavior change is to **understand the motivations and then to develop messaging that supports these motivations**. Behavioral economic principles can be applied to support this process, but **not without transparency**. Indeed, there is an emerging philosophical literature concerned with the ethical implications of applying behavioral economics to change behavior. **Organizations supporting patient behavior change must be cognizant of these implications and have processes in place to ensure ethical application**. This includes the pharmaceutical industry ensuring that their agencies of record and other communication vendors are qualified to operate within the behavioral sciences field, while adhering to relevant ethical principles and codes of conduct.

Reference:

Berliner Senderey A, Kornitzer T, Lawrence G, et al. It's how you say it: Systematic A/B testing of digital messaging cut hospital no-show rates. PLoS ONE. 2020;15(6):e0234817. Published 2020 Jun 23. [doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0234817](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0234817)

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These results highlight the potential of introducing behavioral economic principles into multiple avenues of healthcare delivery in order to improve member adherence and reduce waste in care provision.

Conclusion

Atlantis Health has a proprietary approach to message development and testing that ensures your communications to patients are targeted to patient motivations. Our messages “nudge” patients to attend healthcare appointments and drive positive health outcomes and

Change for Good.



Talk to us at Atlantis Health today and find out how we can apply our proprietary approach to ensure that your communications to patients can effectively and ethically drive behavior change to optimize outcomes and experience. www.atlantishealth.com/contact

Atlantis Health designs, develops and delivers behavior change solutions for healthcare and life sciences organizations around the world. We empower people to manage their health and achieve improved outcomes.

