

# USE OF AN AUTOMATED TELEPHONE RESPONSE SYSTEM FOR A WOMEN'S LIFESTYLE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM

Susan Weber **Buchholz**, PhD, RN<sup>1</sup>, JoEllen **Wilbur**, PhD, RN, FAAN<sup>1</sup>, Diana **Ingram**, PhD<sup>1</sup>, Alexis **Manning**, MA<sup>1</sup>, Louis **Fogg**, PhD<sup>1</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Rush University College of Nursing, Chicago, Illinois

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## ABSTRACT

Physical inactivity is ranked fourth as a global risk factor for mortality. Internationally, physical inactivity disproportionately affects women (33.9%) as compared to men (27.9%). A need exists for innovative physical activity behavioral interventions for women using affordable, accessible technology. The 48-week, community based Women's Lifestyle Physical Activity Program for African American women strived to meet this need by creating an intervention that includes the use of 6 group visits and a personalized step goal. One of three study conditions also received 11 motivational tips to overcome barriers via an automated telephone response system (ATRS), while another received 11 motivational personal calls and a third received no calls. The purpose of this presentation is to present the development and then examine the use of phone technology in the ATRS condition. The research questions are: 1) What was the preferred means of receiving the automated calls (cell phone, home phone, work phone)? 2) Did the number of automated calls completed differ by the means of receiving the calls? 3) What were the challenges encountered with an ATRS?

A randomized cluster, Latin Squares, clinical trial design was used with the order of the conditions randomly assigned to six community sites. Over three years each of the study sites received each of the three study conditions. Five group visits occurred every five weeks in the first 24 weeks with a booster visit in the second 24 weeks. Women in the ATRS condition received one to two calls between group visits that delivered motivational tips. They could listen to more than one tip.

Ninety-seven women of the total 288 enrolled were in the ATRS condition. Of these women, 68% provided cell numbers, 69% provided home numbers, and 27% provided work numbers. The majority of women chose to have messages delivered to their cell phones (73%), followed by home phones (22%), or work phones (5%). The women listened to an average of 9.5 motivational tips. Specific challenges encountered were phone numbers that were not in service throughout the study, which was encountered with 10.8% of the phones at least one time during the study as well as unanswered calls (8.9%). Selected solutions designed to address challenges included closely tracking weekly call reports, using participants' alternative contacts and email to reach them, and always updating participant phone numbers during data collections.

This study has demonstrated that automated telephone messages can be successfully delivered via cell phone technology.