

# Leveraging SMS and Secure Messaging Technology for Patient Reported Outcome Surveys to increase Patient Health Outcomes and Reducing Administration Costs

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**Objective:** The aim of this study is to assess the efficacy of a hybrid SMS and secure messaging approach to administer Patient Reported Outcome (PRO) surveys, identify factors influencing survey completion rates, and examine the benefits for healthcare providers in terms of efficiency, cost reduction, and patient convenience.

**Methods:** A novel HIPAA compliant PROM system that harnesses the high delivery (99%) and open (98%) rates of SMS with proprietary secure messaging was developed. PRO surveys were initiated via standard SMS but the actual survey Q/A were conducted through a secure messaging system without having to download any apps. The study analyzed nearly 3 million SMS survey questions and responses and identified how the number, length, and type of questions affected completion rates. It also examined how setting clear expectations ahead of time impacted both survey participation and completion rates.

**Results:** By analyzing nearly 3 million survey questions and responses across various industries, we discovered that that SMS/secure messaging method resulted in an average completion rate of 80.5%. Further, when we compared the results of surveys where all best-practices methods were followed, we found that completion rates increased significantly to an average of 93%. One such very effective method includes setting expectations specifically by informing the patients in advance of the number of questions and estimated completion time. Using these techniques, completion rates were higher even for surveys with 20+ questions that typically exhibit lower completion rates (61.7% vs. 47%).

**Conclusions:** Enhanced health outcomes, reduced costs for healthcare providers, and increased patient satisfaction can be achieved through the effective use of communication technology in tandem with well-designed and executed PRO surveys. Hybrid SMS-based PRO surveys provide faster results, significantly lower costs compared to app and paper-based surveys, and improved convenience for patients. By optimizing the number, length, and type of questions, and by setting clear expectations, participation and completion rates can be significantly increased, promoting better patient outcomes and significantly decreased administrative expenses for healthcare providers.



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