

Outcomes Study in an Inpatient Adolescent Unit: Methods for Improving Follow-up Retention

Crystal Carbone, B.S.¹, Carolyn Ha, B.S.² and Carla Sharp, Ph.D.²
The Menninger Clinic¹, University of Houston²

Background

- ❖ Retaining participation in longitudinal studies can be challenging (Henderson, Weight, Nixon, & Hart, 2010), especially when the sample consists of adolescent inpatients.
- ❖ Use of questionnaire-based measures tend to show a trend in decreased participation rates (Galea & Tracy, 2007).
- ❖ Research is lacking when examining retention methods to encourage continued participation in longitudinal studies.

Aims

The current study seeks to examine various strategies implemented to increase the participation rate of adolescents and parents at discharge as part of an ongoing outcomes based research protocol from an inpatient adolescent unit.

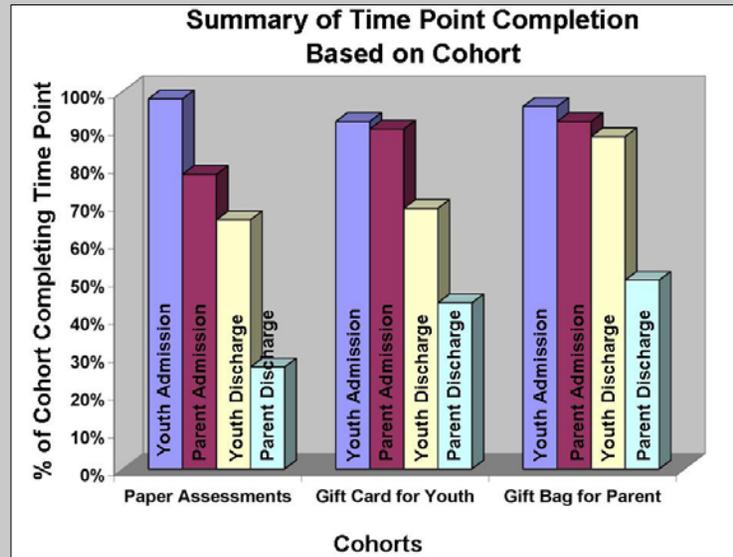
Methods

- ❖ 256 families were approached to participate in a follow up study to track adolescent progress after being discharged from an inpatient unit
- ❖ 216 families (84%) consented to participate
- ❖ 18 families declined after consenting
- ❖ 198 families (77%) included in data analysis
- ❖ 3 Cohorts based on the retention method:

Cohort 1 - (41 families) – Paper Based Assessments mailed to family with return address envelope. Frequently contacted via email and phone to offer time point reminders with no direct incentive.

Cohort 2 – (52 families) – Internet Based Assessments available, still had paper option, YOUTH received a \$30 gift card to an online website for completion of follow up time point assessments

Cohort 3 – (103 families) – Received a Goodie Bag of items containing the study logo and contact information at discharge from inpatient unit (in addition to above mentioned incentives)



	Paper Assessments		Gift Card for Youth		Gift Bag for Parent	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
Youth Admit	40	98%	48	92%	99	96%
Parent Admit	32	78%	46	90%	95	92%
Youth Discharge	27	66%	36	69%	83	88%
Parent Discharge	11	27%	23	44%	48	50%

Results

Chi-square tests were conducted to examine differences in incentive strategies for retention of follow-up participants.

Youth

Significant differences were found for discharge attrition, ($\chi^2 = 11.04$; $p = .004$). Inspection of standardized residuals of the chi-square analyses demonstrated that youth responses to **discharge assessments increased significantly when their parents were given goodie bags** at discharge.

Parent

Significant differences were found in the parent's discharge participation as each incentive strategy was implemented ($\chi^2 = 8.91$; $p = .012$). Introduction of web-based assessments/gift cards increased retention rate at discharge for parents. Additionally, the **inclusion of tangible reminders at discharge of the continued relationship with the treatment facility again increased retention of parent participation.**

Conclusions

- ❖ For youth, introduction of paper-based assessments; on-line assessments and gifts cards did not increase retention rates for youth.
- ❖ For parents, introduction of paper-based assessments; on-line assessments and gifts cards did increase retention rates for youth.
- ❖ Goodie bags at the discharge time point significantly increased follow up rates for both youth and parents.
- ❖ These findings demonstrates the utility of all incentive strategies in retaining parental participation and decreasing youth attrition at discharge. Of particular interest is the notion that goodie bags may present a tangible reminder of the continued relationship with the treatment facility.

