

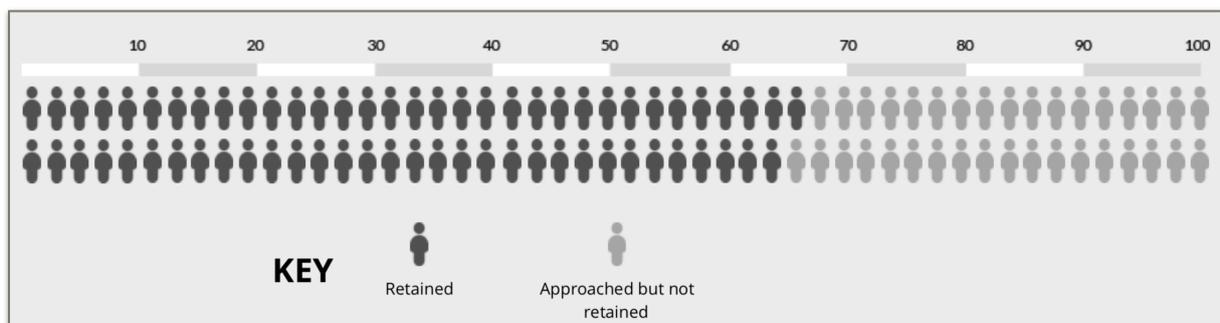
Retention: Electronic (SMS or email) prompts (ID Ret2)

Evidence summary

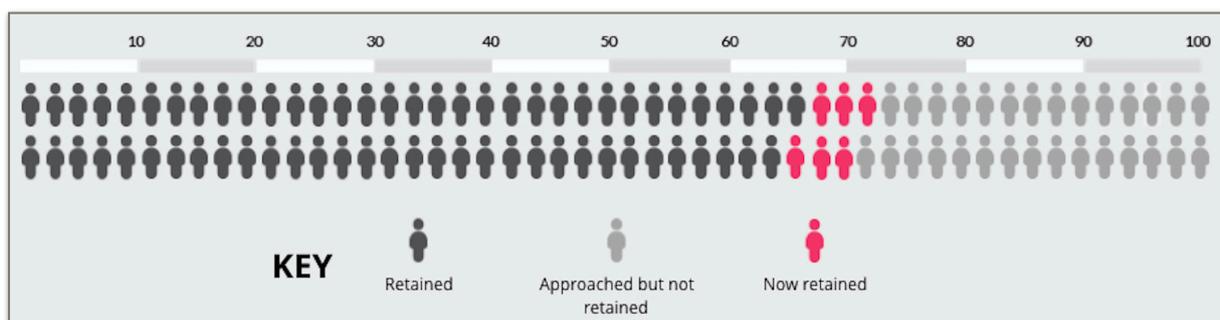
What is it?	Electronic (SMS or email) prompt sent to trial participants to encourage them to return questionnaires. The prompt is sent close to, or after, a participant has received the questionnaire. Message content varies, usually emphasises the importance of completion.
Does it work?	Sending an electronic prompt probably increases retention .
How big is the effect?	An increase of 6.3% (95% confidence interval = 0.5% to 12.2%).
How certain are we?	GRADE Moderate certainty.
Recommendation	We recommend that trialists use electronic prompts to increase retention in trials that use questionnaires.
How can I use this straight away?	See Resource bundle below for details of how to set up prompts and text to form their content.

Practical impact

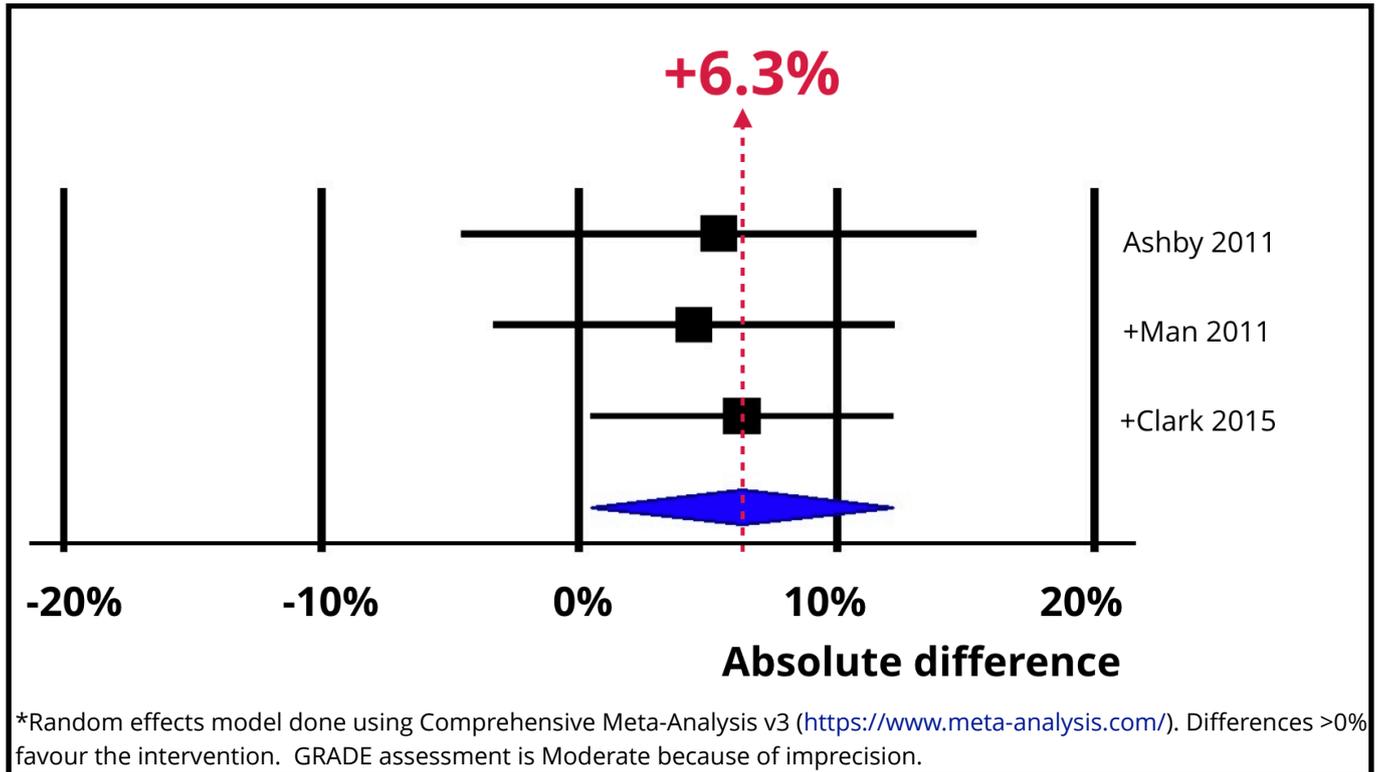
Imagine **initial retention is 65%**. You have a trial with 100 participants that needs responses from 80 to meet its statistical power calculations. Retention of 65% means that you will be 15 responses short (see chart below).



Now imagine using electronic prompts. The chart below shows the impact of an absolute increase of **6.3% (95% CI = 0.5% to 12.2%)**. **Retention is now 71.3%**, which means our best estimate is that you would now only be nine responses short.



Cumulative meta-analysis*



Resource bundle

See <https://www.trialforge.org/resource/evidence-pack-retention-theory-based-cover-letter-id-ret1/>



More information

1. The authors of this summary are Laura Clark, Katie Gillies, David Torgerson and Shaun Treweek.
2. This summary is from the update to the Cochrane review of strategies to improve retention in randomised trials being led by Dr Katie Gillies at the University of Aberdeen. The full review is underway but we are releasing intervention-level evidence early.
3. The 'Does it work?' statement is structured according to effect size and GRADE certainty as per GRADE Guidelines 26 (<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclinepi.2019.10.014>).
4. Data are published in Clark *et al* [https://www.jclinepi.com/article/S0895-4356\(15\)00024-4/fulltext](https://www.jclinepi.com/article/S0895-4356(15)00024-4/fulltext)
5. If you have any questions contact info@trialforge.org.