

Recall Effectiveness

mivision | 1 August 2009

A recent survey by Tony Hanks, the Chairman of Eyecare Plus, has analysed the effectiveness of the various forms of patient recall. Based upon results in 15 practices and involving 2,700 patients, the three month response rate produced some interesting average results:

- Baseline/No Recall - 11.2 per cent
- Pre-printed Postcards - 23.8 per cent
- Individual Letters - 29.2 per cent
- Individual Letters with Enclosures - 21.4 per cent
- Telephone - 30.8 per cent
- Email - 27.3 per cent
- SMS - 16.1 per cent
- SMS and Individual Letter - 21.2 per cent

The study was conducted for an update to a chapter in Tony Hanks' book, *The Optometry Team*. The original study was completed 15 years ago and the latest data was collected using the same protocol so that comparisons could be made.

"The SMS was an absolute surprise to us. Not only was it not effective for recalls, it actually reduced the response to letters when used in conjunction with them," he said.

"The other big surprise is that the telephone response rate has dropped to less than half of what it was 15 years ago. Perhaps this has something to do with all the telemarketing calls people get from overseas".

"Given the importance of the caller's skills for phone recalls, it would seem that the best standard recall is still an individual letter with a clinical message and no sales brochures," said Tony Hanks.