



BACK TO BASICS

A Research Brief from Georgia's Brief Assessment, Screening, Intervention and Continuum of Care System¹

November 2010

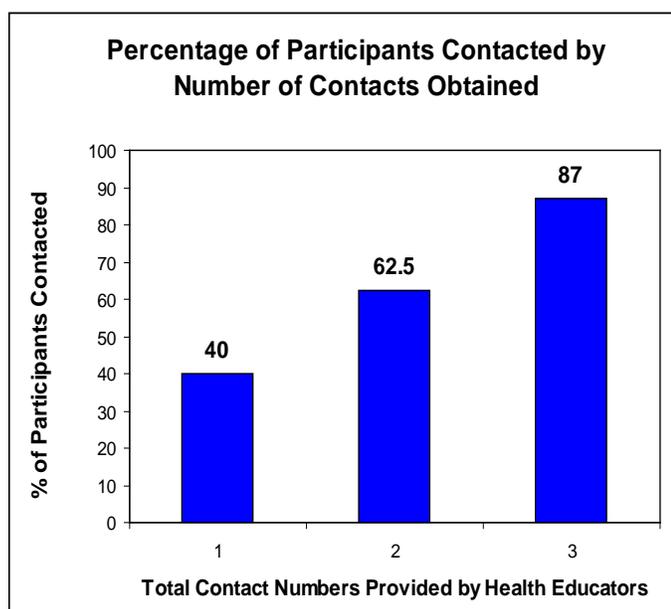
Do more contact numbers help us reach patients for follow up?

Introduction and Rationale: Evaluating the effectiveness of GA BASICS' relies on being able to stay in touch with enrolled patients. At intake, Health Education Specialists ask the participant for various pieces of tracking information (e.g. addresses, phone numbers, hang outs, etc.), and it is important to know how well this tracking information helps us to reach the participants. Since our project is accountable for completing follow-ups with 80% of enrolled patients, it is critical that we be able to make contact with nearly all of them. To assess how well contact numbers help us to get in touch with participants, we examined the success rate in contacting enrolled patients when the evaluation team is provided with 1 (or fewer) phone numbers, 2 phone numbers, or 3+ phone numbers.

Sample: 216 participants with intake dates from September to December of 2009. We assessed whether the evaluation team was able to reach the participant to verify the participant's address.

Results:

- When only **one** phone number was available, we were able to reach participants **40%** of the time.
- With **two** phone numbers, the success rate increased to **62.5%**
- With **three** contact numbers, the success rate increased to **87%**.



Take Home Message:

These data suggest that it is vitally important to obtain as many contact numbers as possible in order to reach the follow-up target rate of 80%. Each additional number obtained by Health Education Specialists gets us closer to our target. There are various reasons why phone numbers are hard to elicit from our participants. For this reason, future efforts should focus on strategies to collect more numbers at intake.

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