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CENTER FOR
CONNECTED HEALTH

**TEXT MESSAGING MAY IMPROVE PRENATAL CARE
ACCORDING TO PILOT STUDY CONDUCTED BY
THE PARTNERS HEALTHCARE CENTER FOR CONNECTED HEALTH**

BOSTON, FEBRUARY 2, 2012 – Text messaging may be a low-cost, effective way to communicate with patients and suggests an improvement in prenatal care for at-risk pregnant adolescents and women, according to data from a recent pilot study published in the current issue of *The Female Patient*, the peer-reviewed journal for office- and hospital-based ob/gyns, primary care physicians and nurse practitioners. In a pilot study developed as a collaboration between the Partners Center for Connected Health, Partners Community Health and the Lynn Community Health Center, data suggests that women receiving text messages found the messages to be helpful and had a higher level of attendance at their prenatal visits compared to a similar cohort in the same medical practice.

“We are using technology in exciting and new ways to deliver quality care to patients, connect providers and patients and provide educational messages and support. Text messaging provides a big opportunity to better engage patients in their care by communicating with them in a channel they prefer,” said Joseph C. Kvedar, MD, Founder and Director of the Center for Connected Health, and study co-author. “As this pilot suggests, texting programs have great potential for providing low-cost, accessible educational messaging to patients. We look forward to additional research to advance our understanding of the impact text messaging can have on prenatal care and other areas of chronic care management.”

In this pilot, 25 patients between 14 to 32 years of age were enrolled; the average age was 22 years old. Participants received informational and supportive text messages throughout their pregnancies and two months post-partum. The messages were personalized to each patient based on date of enrollment, language preference (English or Spanish) and the stage of their pregnancy. Messages were designed to help patients stay connected to their clinical team, and provided educational tips, reminders and motivational support related to the development of the baby and preparation for childbirth, and encouraged newborn and postpartum care.

One hundred percent of the study participants reported reading most or all of the text messages and 95% found the program helpful. 84% said the program helped them learn how to take care of themselves and their baby. Seventeen out of the 25 participants preferred to receive the text messages in Spanish. By potentially increasing attendance at prenatal visits, text messaging can be an important tool to remind patients about the importance of regular care and contribute to improved health outcomes for pregnant adolescents and young adults and their newborns.

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About Lynn Community Health Center

The mission of the Lynn Community Health Center is to provide comprehensive healthcare to everyone, regardless of ability to pay. It has served as the primary source of medical services in Lynn, one of the most medically underserved communities in the Commonwealth, since 1971. It provided over 186,000 outpatient encounters for 34,701 patients this past year - over one out of every three Lynn residents and 41% of its children. The Health Center provides a full scope of health care services to the community: pediatric, family practice, adult medical and ob/gyn primary care services, specialty services, behavioral health and social services, health education, family planning, comprehensive HIV/AIDS services, nutrition services, a dental clinic, and eye clinic, and pharmacy services.

About Partners HealthCare

Partners HealthCare is an integrated health system founded by Brigham and Women's Hospital and Massachusetts General Hospital. In addition to its two academic medical centers, the Partners system includes community and specialty hospitals, community health centers, a physician network, home health and long-term care services, and other health-related entities. Partners is one of the leading biomedical research organizations and a principal teaching affiliate of Harvard Medical School. Partners HealthCare is a non-profit organization. Visit www.partners.org.

About the Center for Connected Health

The Center for Connected Health, a division of Partners HealthCare, is creating effective, new solutions and innovative interventions to deliver quality patient care outside of the traditional medical setting. Our programs use a combination of remote-monitoring technology, sensors, and online communications and intelligence to improve patient adherence, engagement and clinical outcomes. The Center also offers expert online second opinions, virtual visits, and engages in innovative research to uncover new models for better care. The Center's Consulting Services assist companies, providers and other organizations to learn more about entering the connected health space and to prepare products and services for integration into the healthcare delivery system. Visit www.connected-health.org.

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