

# AUTOGENERATED TEXT UPDATES FOR PEDIATRIC SURGICAL PATIENTS

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## BACKGROUND & SCOPE

Waiting while a child has surgery is a stressful time for families. Providing timely updates helps families feel engaged and supported. With a focus on the patient-family experience within the healthcare setting, communication plays an integral part in patient/family perception and satisfaction. The Family Services Nursing role provides liaison services between Operating Room personnel and families to educate, support, and guide families through the perioperative experience. Parent tracker boards are also displayed in the waiting area.

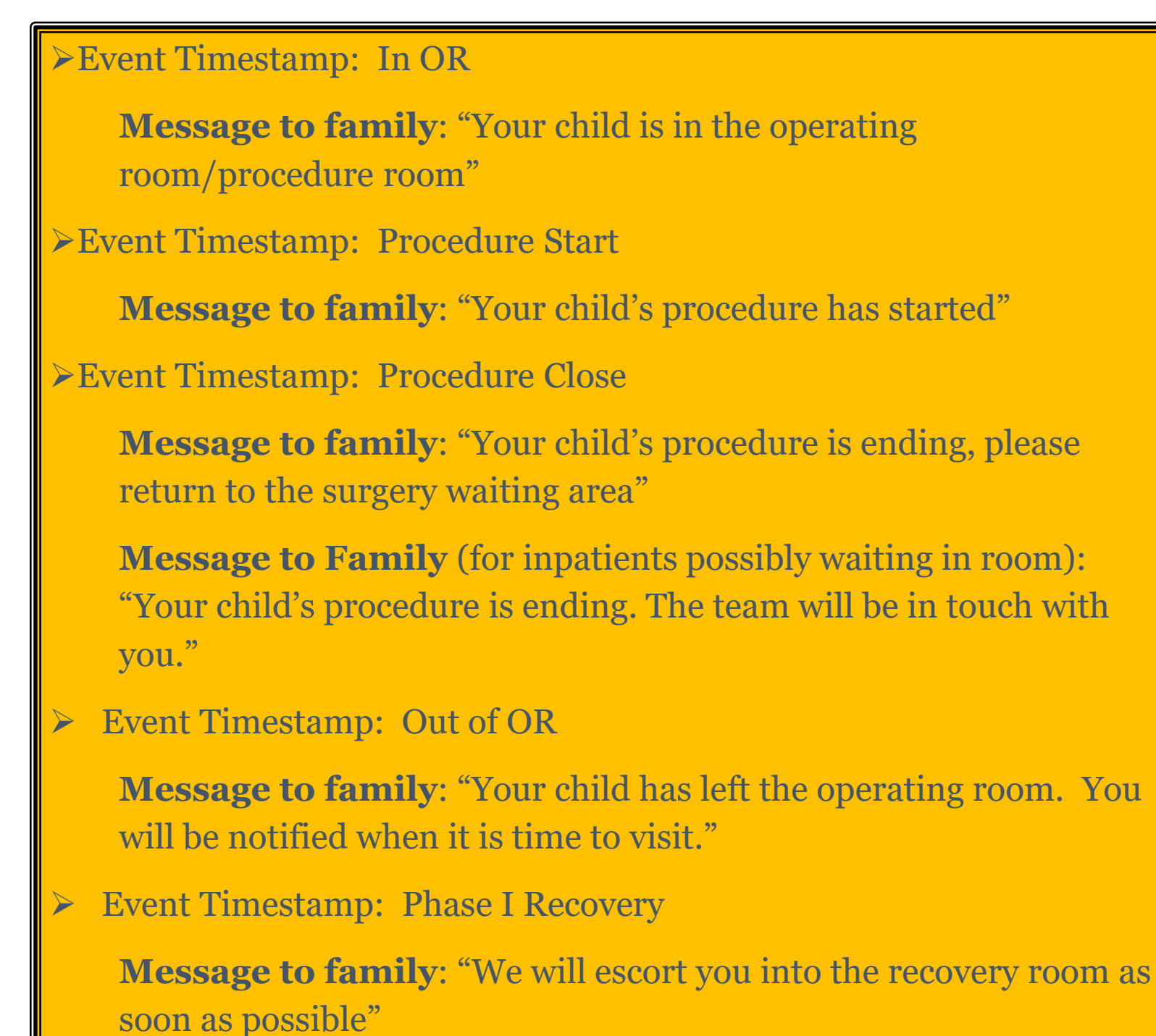
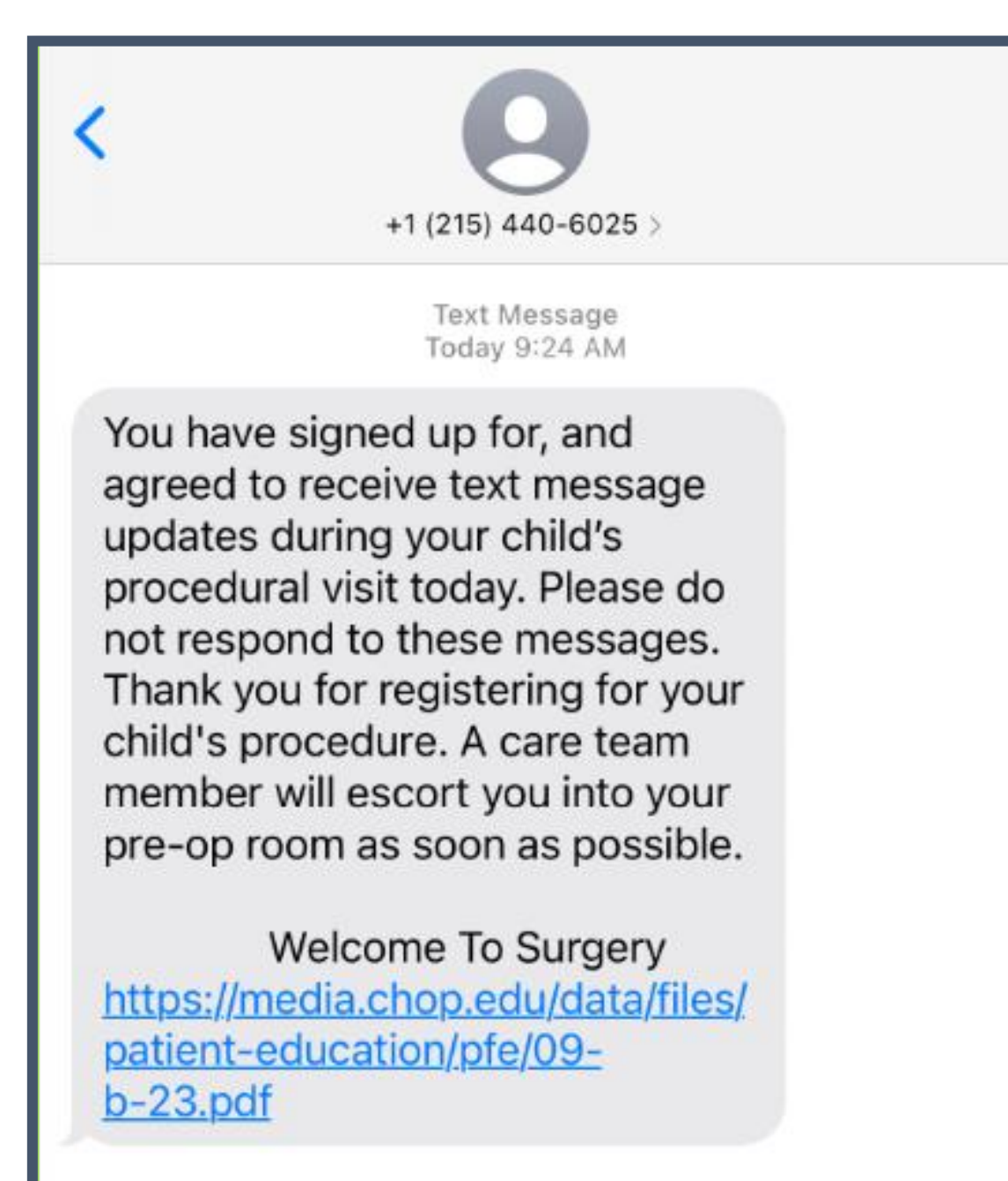
## OBJECTIVE

Text messaging enables family members to confidently untether themselves from the physical waiting area, without fear of missing an update, and still feel engaged. To optimize communication with families and foster a partnership with the healthcare team, the Perioperative Information Systems (IS) committee at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) explored text messaging as a plausible adjunct to current communication systems.

## METHODS

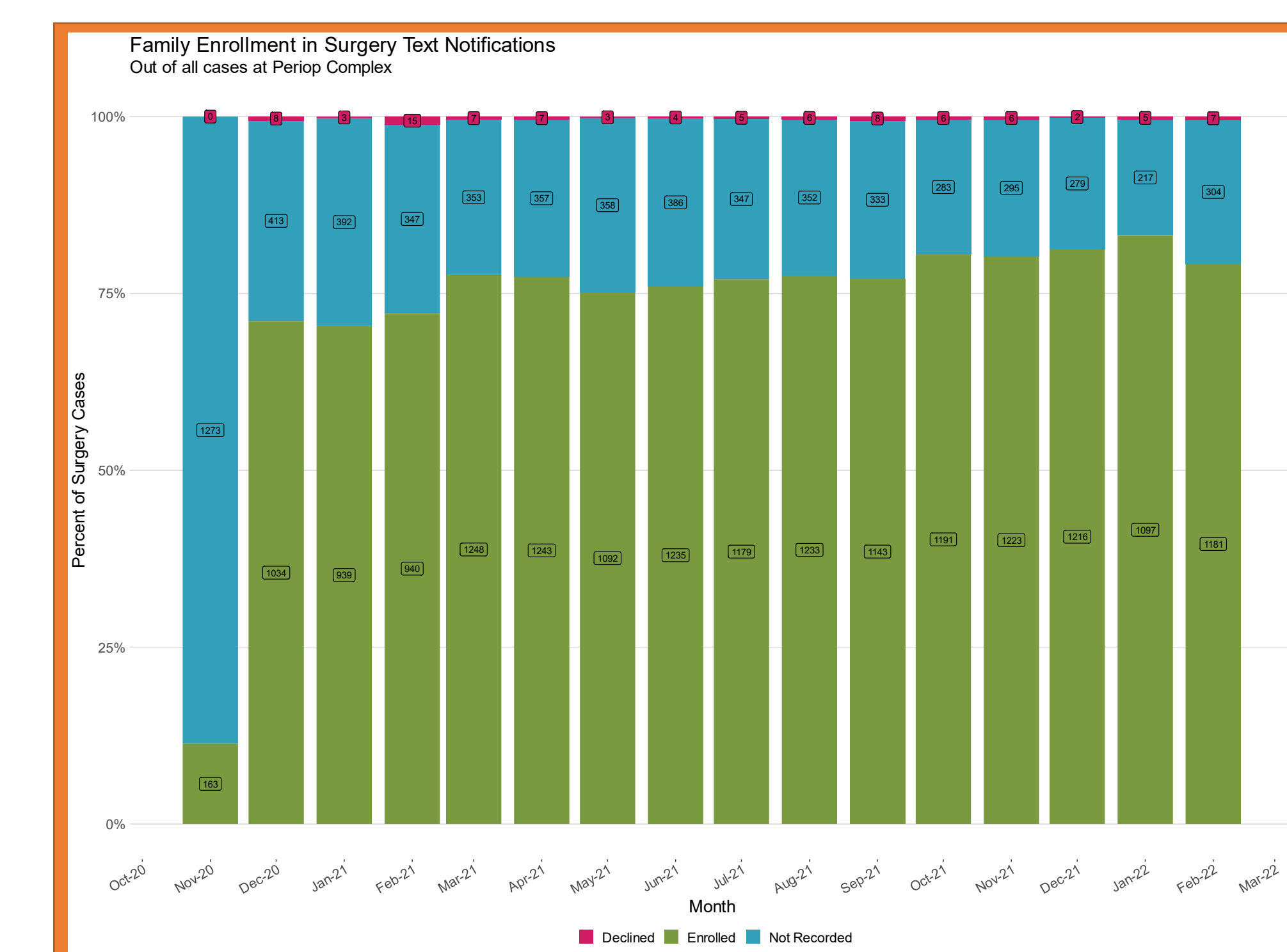
The multidisciplinary members of CHOP's Perioperative IS Committee investigated ways to introduce a non-interactive text communication platform to engage families. Committing to fiscal responsibility, the committee assessed resources already available within the institution. Epic, the electronic medical record used at CHOP, provided the springboard for implementation.

- Case tracking events in Epic trigger autogenerated, prepopulated texts to families, updating throughout surgery.
  - Team representatives integrated feedback from the hospital's Family Advisory Council regarding the specifics and verbiage of text updates to be generated by Epic timestamps.
- Messages are sent directly to a family member's mobile device without the need to download a separate application. Additionally, there is no interference with Operating Room nursing workflow.
- A job-aid for guidance in enrolling the family to texting was developed and disseminated. All day surgery patients are enrolled by patient access representatives upon check-in. Inpatients or Emergency Department patients are enrolled by any PACU RN or support staff.



## RESULTS

- Autogenerated text updates successfully implemented November 2020.
- A retrospective analysis showed a consistent increase to **over 75%** family enrollment.
- In collaboration with Interpreter Services, text updates implemented in Spanish.
  - Goal is to expand to include Arabic and Simplified Chinese.
- Parent Tracker in Surgery Waiting updated to reflect information relayed in texts.
- Texting subsequently expanded to include a link to patient family education with need-to-know information for the day of surgery.
- Texting was further operationalized to include CHOP's bedside medication delivery program providing enrolled families with alerts regarding the status of their medications and time of delivery.



## DISCUSSION

- Family Care Specialist Nurses disseminate monthly Press Ganey Ambulatory Surgery reports to the Peri-Anesthesia Care Unit staff and committees. Anecdotal feedback from families and Press Ganey comments confirm a positive response to the initiative.
- Texting is a significant adjunct to improve the patient/family experience.

## CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Text messaging is widely used and can be leveraged to communicate key events during surgery.
- The use of technology to provide autogenerated text updates promotes patient/family-centered care and patient satisfaction in a convenient and user-friendly way.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We gratefully acknowledge the collaborative and multidisciplinary representatives of the Perioperative Information Systems and Perioperative Patient/Family-Centered Care Committees for their efforts to customize and implement this initiative.