

Text Illness Monitoring (T.I.M.)

A mobile text platform designed to help public health with monitoring



Using T.I.M. for 2019 Novel Coronavirus Monitoring

Monitoring conducted by public health officials has traditionally been conducted via telephone calls, which can be a time-consuming process requiring staff resources. CDC has developed the Text Illness Monitoring (T.I.M.) system, a nationally-centralized option utilizing two-way Short Message Service (SMS)/text messaging to aid in the process. Text messaging is an efficient method to elicit, manage, and act on any 2019-nCoV symptoms among those who are exposed or potentially exposed to the virus. The T.I.M. system was utilized to monitor for influenza symptoms in Michigan¹ with success.

How it works

Participation in the text monitoring program is voluntary for both the state/local health departments. Consenting persons in participating state and local municipalities will receive 2-5 text messages a day for up to 14 days asking if they have symptoms consistent with 2019-nCoV. State/local health officials will immediately be alerted to any person that responds that they are experiencing symptoms and to any persons who fail to respond to two consecutive messages. State/local health officials would then follow up with individuals who are reporting symptoms or those that have been unresponsive.

Key benefits

- Reduces the resource burden on public health for illness monitoring, for contact tracing and monitoring of asymptomatic individuals
- Facilitates reporting through an online dashboard
- Compliant to regulations set by industry standards, telecom authorities and government policy
- Information is protected

The TIM dashboard supports health departments to manage monitoring campaigns

¹ Stewart RJ, Rossow J, Eckel S, et al. Text-Based Illness Monitoring for Detection of Novel Influenza A Virus Infections During an Influenza A (H3N2)v Virus Outbreak in Michigan, 2016: Surveillance and Survey. JMIR Public Health Surveill. 2019;5(2):e10842. Published 2019 Apr 26. doi:10.2196/10842 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6658270/>



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Frequently Asked Questions

How do I get access to T.I.M.?

State or local public health departments may request access by sending an email to eocevent340@cdc.gov. The public health department will need to provide a primary and secondary point of contact to act as an administrator in T.I.M. After registration, the public health administrators will receive an email with information on how to log in and access the system.

Is there a dashboard and what information can be seen?

The system access includes a dashboard with summary information on number of persons being monitored, and information related to the alerts/notifications that public health needs to take action on (i.e., those that reply YES to a text indicating symptoms, those that have not responded to two consecutive texts).

Who will be able to access the information in T.I.M.?

Public health administrators and their designees will have access to data within their jurisdiction. CDC will only have access to the deidentified aggregate data for monitoring campaigns.

Can I request access for other people in my jurisdiction?

The administrators may add users for their state.

How will I know if someone responds that they have symptoms?

If someone in your jurisdiction replies YES to a text message indicating symptoms you will receive an email notification. An email notification will also be sent if a person does not respond to two consecutive texts sent. These alerts/notifications are also captured on the dashboard.



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