

October 2022

# INVESTIGATOR NEWSLETTER

## BeST Bowel Study

Better Screening participation Trials for Bowel cancer



Dear Investigators

Since our opening meetings, a WORKING GROUP has been meeting every week to get things going for both BeST Bowel and SMARTERscreen. Current membership comprises me, Jenny McIntosh, Belinda Goodwin, Carlene Wilson, Driss Ait Ouakrim, Louisa Flander, and Jenn Huang. If any of you would like to contribute to the Working Group, we meet every Wednesday 11:00 – 12:00. We can also share minutes of the meetings with you.

I am very conscious that we have not been informing all of you of our progress and plans. I hope this newsletter will provide some of the information. Additional discipline-based Working Groups will be established soon to tackle specific aspects of bowel cancer screening participation.

Achievements and Decisions and Ideas from the Working Group (so far...)

- Mark Jenkins

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# Both BeST Bowel and SMARTERscreen

## Achievements

### Co-design of video content for SMS: survey and workshop

·Belinda Goodwin and Team conducted online surveys with consumers and experts to identify preferred instructional and motivational videos to include in the SMARTERscreen SMS content

·Deciding the Videos Workshop described the results of the surveys to the investigators and finalised preferred video(s) that need to be ready by the end of 2022 with some final editing. Note that the workshop discussion and outcomes remain relevant for BeST Bowel, but we will have more time to edit or create new content - See 'Decisions' section for more detail.

### Publications

Louisa Flander led a publication exploring why other countries have higher screening rates than Australia.

Flander L, Dekker E, Andersen B, Larsen MB, Steele RJ, Malila N, Sarkeala T, van der Vlugt M, de Klerk C, Knottnerus B, Bertels L, Woudstra A, Spaander MCW, Fransen M, Heinavaara S, Dillon M, Ait Ouakrim D, Jenkins M. What can We Learn From High-Performing Screening Programs to Increase Bowel Cancer Screening Participation in Australia? *Cancer Control*. 2022;29:10732748221121383 doi 10.1177/10732748221121383.

### New appointments

Associate Professor Jenny McIntosh appointed to University of Melbourne (UoM) "Academic Specialist in Cancer Screening, Prevention and Implementation Science" for BeST Bowel and SMARTERscreen (focusing initially on SMARTERscreen) and started 01/08/2022

## Decisions

### General

- SMARTERscreen will be prioritised over BeST Bowel for the first 6 months while we establish our working relationship with the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP)
- SMARTERscreen will concentrate on an intervention in general practice. This will ultimately inform BeST Bowel interventions, for which we will conduct research through the National Cancer Screening Register (NCSR)

### Communications with investigators

- There is a need for the Working Group to communicate regularly with all investigators
- Meetings for specific topics and areas of expertise will be organised and any investigators with expertise in that topic will have an open invitation to join

### Full-time project officer role

- Professional staff member at UoM6, to provide administrative and managerial support for BeST Bowel and SMARTERscreen; responsibilities will include liaising with NBCSP/NCSR. We have a preferred candidate - will keep you all posted.
- Belinda's team are also recruiting staff to manage Qld recruitment for SMARTERscreen.

### Establishing an advisory group

- Purpose is to help us by facilitating important connections, especially sustainable connections with government
- Mark will be included on the advisory committee as a conduit/liaison point between them and the Working Group/steering committee
- Terms of Reference and members TBD (as of 29/09/2022)

### Building a website

- The website will establish BeST Bowel's presence in this research space and identify the people involved and their affiliations
- SMARTERscreen can occupy a page within the BeST Bowel site
- We aim for the website to be hosted by UoM with minimal branding to demonstrate this program is a consortium of national partners
- Driss is working with a developer to help us build this

## Ideas

### Consumer engagement

Two groups of consumers who we need to engage with:

- Consumers who we work with as part of the research co-design
- Consumers with an advisory role on research development (currently have representatives from the Jodi Lee Foundation and two consumer investigators on SMARTERscreen)

Options for consumer engagement:

- Option 1: having our own 'living lab' of consumers
- Option 2: seek input from existing consumer groups led by other researchers
- Option 3: seek input from consumers via surveys

### Collaborations and networking

#### Plan to attend and present at the International Cancer Screening Network conference

- Biennial conference, with the next one in Turin, Italy in 2023; for researchers working in all aspects of cancer screening including a focus on participation
- Co-founded by NCI (US) and Erasmus MC University Medical Center Rotterdam
- Potentially present SMARTscreen findings/initial SMARTERscreen SMS development findings

#### Collaborating with other groups working in cancer screening

- Establishing a virtual cancer screening and prevention hub: where multiple groups set up a joint website to present work to each other and share ideas
- Participating in a national workshop on future cancer screening (lung, liver, melanoma), establishing Melbourne School of Population and Global Health's expertise and presence in the cancer screening space (organised by Dr Claire Nightingale)

### Early/mid-career researchers

- Encouraging and supporting early/mid-career researchers to lead and have ownership of a topic and working group (potentially with a more senior researcher in an advisory role)

### Future publication ideas

- Opinion pieces underway
- Each intervention type/approach (e.g., each proposed modification)
- Each subcategory of findings (e.g., individual subpopulations of under-screener)
- Initial pilot work (e.g., video survey)
- Consider publishing under a study group name to be inclusive of investigators
- Communications plan/group currently being developed

# SMARTERscreen

## Achievements

### Presentations

- Seminar, UoM Centre for Cancer Research (UMCCR): SMARTScreen results
- PC4 Community Advisory Group and GP Circle
- Oral presentation, Clinical Oncology Society of Australia (COSA): SMARTScreen results

## Decisions

### Trial design

- Three arms: 1) control, 2) SMS message alone, 3) SMS message + content bundle (including the video content)
- Aim to determine if increase in screening is due to the SMS only OR the SMS + content
- Sample size for a 3-arm design: 60 GP clinics
- Number of patients per practice being calculated
- Cluster randomised trial: cluster at general practice level
- Queensland and Victorian practices involved

### Patient inclusion

- Patients aged between 50-60 who are due for their NBCSP kit and have not been diagnosed with colorectal cancer
- All patients (not just 'active patients' as per SMARTscreen)
- Too challenging to ascertain whether SMARTERscreen participants are naïve/intender/refuser/other, but this is something to consider for BeST Bowel
- Some granularity in the data by age, gender, remoteness, state, GP location
- Hoping to have a more complete data set by accessing NCSR data for results

## Decisions

### Intervention

#### SMS:

- SMARTERscreen SMS will include GP endorsement

#### SMS bundle:

- Motivational and instructional videos
- Video selection from Choosing the Videos Workshop and consumer survey: led by Belinda Goodwin and Team
- 3 most popular motivational videos (to be edited into one video based on consumer and expert input): Mary-Anne and Steve, Brian's Story, Heather's Story
- Most popular instructional video: animated 'How to' NBCSP instructions (reduce to 2 mins)

#### Next steps:

- Videos being edited once final decision is made about content
- SMS wording now includes: '[Your general practice] strongly encourages you to do this test.'
- Data capture will be finalised
- Sample size calculation for patient numbers will be complete
- Ethics submitted
- Protocol, communications' plan and timeline underway

## Ideas

### Data extraction

- Data will be manually extracted from GP practices using the NCSR Health Provider Portal
- This is more labour-intensive than collecting data directly from the NCSR in batches, but the second option is not feasible in the short time we have.
- Finalising queries to extract data for eligible patients from GP EMRs.

### Technical possibilities to consider

- Sending the initial SMS at a specific time of day (e.g., inside vs outside of work hours)
- Collecting data on how long videos are viewed for

# BeST Bowel

## Achievements

### General

- In June, Mark spoke with Ged Kearney (Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, background in GI nursing) at the Jodi Lee Foundation launch in Sydney, who expressed interest in further discussions
- Have communicated a summary of initial modification ideas (plus our group's funding and expertise) with the NBCSP, focusing on the most feasible modifications first (QR codes, SMS, letter)
- Driss has drafted an Op Ed describing the potential of this project and the fact that it has already been funded
- NBCSP have agreed to share some mock-ups of modified material for co-design

## Ideas

### Platform trial design

- Currently investigating the suitability of the platform trial design (as of 29/09/2022)

### Brainstorming modifications

Healthily's nudge (reminder SMS) function and interactive package: pre or post kit

Ways of getting around practical challenges of modifying the kit may include:

- Printing the QR code on the invitation letter, instead of incorporating it into the kit
- Adding QR code on as a sticker
- Consider implementing some of the kit modifications outside of the assembly line

## Ideas

### Mapping new media screening promotion landscape

- Potentially useful to map the media landscape (across traditional and new media) in a statistically controlled way for bowel cancer screening promotion content and see whether this correlates with long-term changes in screening uptake

### PhD student project ideas

- A number of theses with each student focusing on a different demographic (e.g., culturally and linguistically diverse communities, males, 50–54-year-olds)

Students can be involved in:

- Reviews, surveys, running/designing focus groups, post-trial evaluations that link to their specific population
- Deliverables of the grant, e.g., pilot project
- Evaluating NBCSP materials/materials we produce (including videos)
- E.g., co-design with consumers around the pre-notification letter
- Specific projects within the area of digital health