Text Illness Monitoring

Text Illness Monitoring, or TIM, is a text messaging system developed by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that helps public health organizations monitor symptoms of enrolled participants. TIM is used to monitors symptoms during an infectious disease outbreak, with daily check-ins using two-way short message service (SMS) text or chat bot virtual assistant messaging. Your participation in TIM is entirely voluntary, and you will not be penalized for not participating in TIM. You can read more about TIM here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/TIM.html

What data does TIM collect?
If you choose to participate in TIM, the platform will collect:
- Name
- Phone number
- Number of days remaining in the monitoring period
- Yes/No answer to questions about health symptoms

How does TIM collect your data?
If you choose to participate in TIM, your phone number will be enrolled in the platform and you will receive a welcome text message notifying you of your enrollment. You will receive a daily message asking whether you have symptoms consistent with the communicable disease you are being monitored for and will be prompted to reply 'Yes' or 'No.' If you do not respond to the daily message, the TIM system will send a reminder. At the end of the monitoring period, you will receive a final message informing them that they have completed monitoring and will be unenrolled from TIM.

How does TIM use your data?
New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) or your local public health department will use your data to monitor your symptoms of the communicable disease you are being monitored for. If you report symptoms or do not respond to text messages, we will follow up with you with a different method of communication, including but not limited to a phone call or in person visit.   You will receive text messages for the specific length of your monitoring campaign, or until you opt out.

How does the CDC TIM platform store your data?
Centers for Disease Control (CDC) advises at this time that TIM uses standard Security Development Lifecycle (SDL) principles, embedding security requirements into every phase of development. Standards defined by Amazon Web Services (AWS) are also in place to help protect customer data in accordance with personally identifiable information (PII) and HIPAA guidelines. The upgraded platform is hosted in AWS cloud centers. Connections established between users and the data centers are encrypted, and all public endpoints are secured using industry-standard Transport Layer Security (TLS). TLS effectively establishes a security-enhanced browser-to-server connection using HTTPS to help ensure data confidentiality and integrity between desktops and data centers. Unauthorized traffic is blocked to and within AWS datacenters. The infrastructure is constantly maintained, enhanced, and verified by AWS,

and regular penetration testing is employed to continually validate the performance of security controls and processes.

You can request for your data to be deleted at any time. For more information, please contact the CDC at timsupport@cdc.gov.

Who has access to TIM?

Your data is shared with your local public health department, and with the New Jersey Department of Health. CDC advises at this time it has access to aggregate, or anonymous, information. Aggregated and/or anonymized information does not constitute personal information. CDC advises at this time that your data is not shared with anyone else.

What if you choose not to participate in TIM?

Your participation in TIM is entirely voluntary, and you will not be penalized for not participating in TIM. You can opt out of participating in TIM at any time, by sending a text message to opt out. Opting out of TIM does not remove you from NJDOH or your local public health department's monitoring program, and NJDOH or your local public health department may follow up with you with traditional symptom monitoring methods including but not limited to phone calls, in person visits, and hospitalization, depending on the severity of your symptoms.

Changes to TIM

The CDC can make changes to TIM at any time, without advising NJ DOH or your local public health department. For more information, please contact the CDC at timsupport@cdc.gov.