India Country-Specific Phone Set-up

Activate DND & Subscribe to CommCareHQ Messages

Important!

To activate Do Not Disturb Service: SMS ‘START 0’ (without quotations, zero) to 1909.

To subscribe to messages from Dimagi, i.e. messages sent from CommCareHQ: SMS ‘START to +917760962755’. Not necessary to dial +91, but definitely enter zero before the number.

Summary:

- New government regulations to reduce spam have made it very difficult to send SMS in India and the gateways are playing catch-up to meet the regulations.
- Anyone can opt into a government maintained do not disturb (DND) list. If they are on this list we can't send them SMS unless they explicitly opt-in.
- We should make sure ASHAs we work with / SIMs we procure are not on the DND list or opt in. It's unclear whether being on DND might cause things to change in the future, so I think we prefer them not be on, even if currently being on + opting in is ok.
- In addition to working around the DND list, we have more flexibility if users specifically opt-in to receive SMS from us (details below). If users opt-in we can use a named sender ID (currently DIMAGI, but being changed per field's request to COMCAR), and send between the hours of 9pm and 9am.
- These regulations seem to keep changing and the gateways keep adjusting to fall in line. Dimagi will stay on top of this and respond to changes in regulations and communicate to partners accordingly.

What you need to know/do from now on:

1. Try to ensure all the users aren't on the DND list (they may not know this).
2. Make sure all the users opt in as part of the initial CommCare training.
3. Step 2 is especially important if the users is on DND, as it is the only way we can send them messages. **Step 2 should always be done no matter what, but it absolutely has to be done if the user is on DND.**
   
   *These steps also apply to all existing deployments.*

To Opt In:

- Have the user send a "START" message to +917760962755. This is a text message with the single word "start" in it.
- *(To unsubscribe from the messages, subscriber can send STOP message to +917760962755, although I don't think we'll encourage anyone to do this)*

The success and failure auto responses for the Opt-In VN are as following:

**START:**

- You have successfully opted to receive all messages from Dimagi Inc. To opt out of these messages in the future, please send STOP to +917760962755.
- You have already opted to receive all messages from Dimagi Inc. To opt out of these messages in the future, please send STOP to +917760962755.

**STOP:**

- You have successfully opted out of receiving message from Dimagi Inc. To opt in to these messages in the future, please send START to +917760962755.
- You have already opted out of receiving message from Dimagi Inc. To opt in to these messages in the future, please send START to +917760962755.

**FAQ:**

*I didn't opt anyone in and they're already getting messages from the named code. I thought you said that wasn't allowed?*

That's true. So right now our gateway isn't enforcing the opt-in process for people not on DND, but reserves the right to do so at any time. This means that they can flip a switch without telling us that will suddenly prevent messages from being sent to anyone who hasn't opted in, so make sure to opt everyone in as soon as possible.

**What else might change in the future?**

It is possible that we may eventually be restricted to only sending preapproved, templated, messages. I'll let you know if this happens.

**Opt-In notifications will be sent every month after registration to the user.**

Anyone who has opted in for SMS will be receiving a monthly notice from our gateway, per new regulations. If we think this will be confusing for the ASHAs we may want to start bringing it up during trainings.

**Message from the gateway provider:**

The amendment released on TRAI Regulation states that a reminder SMS has to be sent every thirty days to all Opt-in Numbers registered.

Please find the TRAI link for your reference [Page 2, Point 6.(d)]

As a part of this requirement we will be required to send monthly reminders to the Opted-In users through the Opt-In account(s). The process for the same has been initiated.