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Did Not Attend Policy

INTRODUCTION

Appointments are wasted every day in the NHS, 'Did Not Attend' (DNA), i.e. the patient does not turn up for the appointment and does not contact the surgery in advance to cancel/change appointment. The affect of these are:

- An increase in the overall waiting time for appointments
- Waste of NHS valuable and scare resource's
- Frustration for both staff and patients
- A potential risk to the health of the patient

GENERAL POLICY

If a patient fails to attend a pre-booked appointment text message will be sent to the patient informing them that they missed the appointment and that a further missed appointment may result in their removal from the practice list. When the second DNA happens within a 6 month period the patient receives a phone call and a final warning, this is documented in the journal or in a task within the patient record. If there is a 3rd DNA without good reason, the patient will receive a letter stating the number of DNAs they have had both in primary, community and secondary care, they are asked to contact the practice within 7 days of receipt of this letter stating failure to do so will result in the removal of their name form the practice list.

If the patient fails to contact the practice or service manager within the 7 day timeframe, the matter will be discussed at a practice meeting and a majority agreement will be reached as to whether the patient will be removed from the practice list. In this case a formal removal letter will be issued.

Warning letters are valid for a period of throughout a patients registration with the practice.

SCREENING APPOINTMENTS

Where a patient with a chronic condition or is otherwise deemed to be "at risk" fails to attend a screening or a recall appointment there may be an implied duty on the practice to follow-up the reason for non-attendance to ensure that the patient's health is not at risk.

The responsible clinician (usually the doctor or the nurse holding the clinic or a nominated member of the admin team) will be responsible for initiating action to contact the patient by telephone to determine the reason for the failure to attend, and where possible re-arrange the appointment.

Where a new appointment is arranged, this will be followed up by a confirmation text message and, the day prior to the appointment date, a further text message to the patient will be made to check that they will attend with the option of being able to cancel the appointment from the text message.

The clinician will have overall responsibility for the individual patient follow-up and attendance, although the administration aspects may be delegated.

The DNA must be coded onto the clinical system at each non-attendance.

The office manager will be responsible in ensuring the DNA policy is adhered to and should review all actions are completed. When the review is complete this information should be returned to the Practice Manager by way of individual patient tasks on a weekly basis.