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Did Not Attend (DNA Policy)

Introduction

Did not Attend's are defined as where the patient did not turn up for the appointment and did not contact the surgery in advance to cancel/change appointment. The effects of these are:

- An increase in the waiting time for appointments
- Frustration for both staff and patients
- A waste of resources
- A potential risk to the health of the patient

General Policy

If a patient fails to attend a pre-booked appointment they will be sent a "Did Not Attend" SMS message in the first instance. If the patient has 3 DNA's or more in the space of 12 months, an informal warning letter will be sent to the patient, advising them that a further occurrence could risk removal from the practice.

If the patient fails to attend a further appointment, 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 warning letter will be issued.

Warning letters are valid for a period of 12 months. Removal based on warnings greater than 12 months old will be invalid – in this case a further formal warning and period of grace will be required.

Monthly DNA figures will be published in the main practice waiting area and may also be published on the practice website and social media pages.

Patients that cancel at short notice

Patients that contact the surgery to cancel their appointment within 30 mins of the appointment time, should be marked as a DNA and should be sent an SMS message stating "Thank you for

contacting Woodlands Surgery to cancel your appointment today. In future please can you try and give 24hrs notice of a cancellation to allow us to offer the slot to another patient. Thank you” This is done by right clicking the appointment, go to the SMS option and select the preset SMS message to send.

Patients that cancel with more than 30mins notice should have the appointment marked as “cancelled by patient”. This is done by right clicking on the appointment on systmone, go the the administration option then select cancelled by patient.

Screening Appointments

Where a patient with a chronic condition, or who 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) 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 is to be followed up with a letter of confirmation, and, the day prior to the new appointment date, a further telephone call to the patient is to be made to check that they will attend.

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.