

DNA and appointment reminder Policy

Introduction to 'Did not Attend' appointments

'Did Not Attend' (DNA) is when the patient does not turn up for the appointment and does not contact the surgery in advance to cancel/change appointment.

The Elmwood Medical Practice is committed to ensuring that the best possible service is provided to all patients registered with the practice.

Patient non-attendance at a booked appointment adversely impacts on practice staff and its patients in the following manner:

- The 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) patient takes the appointment slot of another patient who could have attended. The effect of this is an increase in the waiting time for appointments.
- The time and personnel required to follow-up and rebook DNA patients diverts practice staff from other duties and is therefore a waste of resources.
- DNA's increase costs, reduce efficiency of clinics, increase the mismatch between demand and capacity and decrease practice productivity.

Consistent application of the DNA policy by all practice staff (clinical and non-clinical) plays an important role in encouraging patients to assist in ensuring that Clinics are managed as efficiently as possible.

This policy relates the handling of DNA's and outlines the expectations of patients and staff in the management of these instances.

Policy

A monthly audit will be performed to identify patients who have DNAed in the previous month. If a patient fails to attend three pre-booked appointments within a twelve month period an informal warning letter will be sent to the patient advising them how to cancel/change their appointment (Appendix 1).

If the patient fails to attend another appointment, a formal warning letter will be sent reminding them that a further recurrence within the next 12 months will result in them being removed from the practice list (Appendix 2).

If the patient fails to attend a third appointment, the matter will be discussed at the partners' meeting and a decision made as to whether the patient is removed from the list (Appendix 3).

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

Dear Patient,

We are writing to let you know that according to our records you failed to attend for an appointment on (type date) At (type time) with (type clinician)

We are sure that the majority of our patients, including yourself, do not intentionally fail to turn up. Sometimes people do genuinely forget or they forget to telephone to cancel a pre-booked appointment.

We hope you can help us to reduce the number of lost appointments by taking any necessary steps you can to avoid this situation arising again.

If you need to cancel an appointment you can do so in the future using one of the following options:

- Directly face to face with reception staff or clinician
- Via the telephone using the 24hr automated message service (02890204248)
- Via the telephone by speaking to a member of staff (02890204248)
- Via the practice website

Yours faithfully

Elmwood Medical Practice

Appendix 2

Dear Patient

We note from our records that you have failed to attend 3 appointments in the lastmonths.

If you need to cancel an appointment you can do so in the future using one of the following options:

- Directly face to face with reception staff or clinician
- Via the telephone using the 24hr automated message service (02890204248)
- Via the telephone by speaking to a member of staff (02890204248)
- Via the practice website

If you should fail to attend a further appointment we will have no alternative but to ask you to find another practice in the area.

Yours faithfully,

Elmwood Medical Practice

Dear Patient

We note from our records that, despite the warning letter sent to you on....., you have failed to attend another appointment at the surgery.

In the circumstances we have no other option than to remove you from the practice list. We will inform BSO of your removal today and you will remain registered here for a maximum of 10 days following this date or until BSO are notified that you have registered with a new practice, whichever is the soonest.

You can register with another practice in the area by approaching a practice and asking them to explain their procedures as all practices will vary. If you are having difficulty registering, BSO can allocate you a practice but this will not be a GP of your choice. Their telephone number is 028 90 324431.

Yours faithfully,

Elmwood Medical Practice

NOTICE FOR NOTICEBOARDS & WEBSITE

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