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Did Not Attend (DNA) Policy Leaflet

If you require this leaflet in a different format or you need further information or assistance, please contact Reception.

Introduction

Approximately 55 appointments per month are classified as 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) - i.e. the patient did not turn up for the appointment and did not contact the surgery in advance to cancel/change appointment. The effects of this 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

It is important that any DNA policy is agreed as a practice and patients are made aware of the policy and the reason for implementing.

Whilst it is important to be consistent, there will always be exceptions on an individual case-by-case basis.

Genral Policy

If a patient fails to attend a pre-booked appointment on 2 occasions 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 another appointment, a formal warning letter will be issued.

If a patient fails to attend another appointment after a formal warning letter has been issued, the patient will be removed from the practice patient list.

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.

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) or a member of the administration 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 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.