

# Barwell & Hollycroft Medical Centres



## **CANCELLATION OF APPOINTMENTS/MISSED APPOINTMENTS POLICY** *(for patients)*

### **Introduction**

Cancellation of appointments is imperative as it allows us to open these appointments up for other patients to access.

Approximately 1752 appointments are missed over a 6-month period, where the patient did not turn up for their appointment and did not contact the surgery in advance to cancel or change their 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

If a patient does not attend for a face-to-face appointment or they miss their telephone appointment, they are not automatically rebooked for that same day.

If the problem is “urgent” then they can either:

1. Be added to on call list, this will be triaged by the on-call doctor
2. Visit an Urgent Care Centre in the local area

It is important that patients are aware of our cancellations and missed appointments policy and our reasons for implementing it. Whilst it is important to be consistent, there will be exceptions on an individual case-by-case basis. The policy should be displayed on our notice boards in the waiting room, as well as a copy on the surgery website. This will also be discussed by the patient participation group, as their support is important in supporting the process.

If a patient fails to attend an appointment on more than one occasion in the space of 12 months, a text message (or letter for patients without a mobile phone) will be sent to the patient.

If the patient fails to attend a second appointment within the 12-month period, a further SMS/letter will be sent highlighting the importance of cancelling appointments and the possibility of being removed from the practice should their attendance be low.

If the patient fails to attend a 3<sup>rd</sup> appointment, a final warning letter is to be sent.

If the patient fails to attend a 4<sup>th</sup> appointment, this will be raised to the Practice Manager to review. This can then be discussed at a practice meeting as to whether the patient will be removed from the practice list due to the number in missed appointments. In this case, a letter will be issued stating the removal of registration from the practice.

Warning letters are valid for a 12-month rolling period. 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.

# Barwell & Hollycroft Medical Centres



## PLEASE NOTE

Due to an increase in the number of wasted appointments through patients failing to attend appointments without informing the surgery, it has become necessary to implement the following policy:

**If you repeatedly fail to attend appointments you may be removed from this practice list and required to find an alternative doctor.**

If you cannot attend your appointments for any reason, please let us know as soon as possible, giving at least 24 hours notice. We can then offer the appointment to someone else.  
Thank you for your co-operation

# Barwell & Hollycroft

## Medical Centres



### **CANCELLATION OF APPOINTMENTS/DNA PROCESS**

- Patients should select option 1 when calling to cancel their appointment
- Patients will be put through to the Cancellation voicemail box where they will be instructed to leave a voice message containing, name, date of birth, appointment time, date and brief reason
- Cancelled appointments should be cancelled 24 hours before appointment time otherwise this will be coded on patients record as a 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) by admin team
- Admin will access the mailbox (via the practice email) and action the messages and cancel appointments or code as appropriate
- If patients call through to appointments or attend front desk asking to cancel the appointment, if the appointment is within 24 hours reception staff are to advise patients to call and cancel using option 1.
- If the appointment is cancelled with more than 24 hours' notice this can be cancelled by reception.  
(Exceptions for 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) would be female patients cancelling Cervical Cytology Appointments due to menstruation and any patients who have been admitted to hospital)