

Major Oak Medical Practice Did not attend policy

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 100 appointments per month are '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 effect of these is:

- 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 on more than two occasions in the last 12 months, an informal warning letter will be sent to the patient, advising them that a further occurrence will risk removal from the practice.

If the patient fails to attend another appointment, the matter will be discussed at a practice meeting taking into account the patient's health issues, 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.

Patients must give at least 24 hours' notice if they wish to cancel their appointment, this is to allow the practice to offer the appointment to someone else who need it

The practice will display a notice of this policy in the waiting area and on the website.

SCREENING APPOINTMENTS

Where a patient with a chronic condition or 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.

A further appointment will be offered or if appropriate, 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. This action includes patients who DNA their depression review appointments.

The clinician will have overall responsibility for the individual patient follow-up and attendance, although the administration aspects may be delegated to the Reception Supervisor or the Practice Manager.

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

The Practice Manager will be responsible for the issue of a monthly DNA clinical system report by clinicians for clinician review.

The administrator who is responsible for the Depression QOF, will monitor the patients who DNA their review appointments and will add a telephone consultation at the end of the clinician session for reviewing the patient over the phone and offering the patient a further face to face appointment.

The DNA figures will be communicated to the Patient Participation Group and announced on the Practice Newsletter.

DNA IN CHILDREN

There have been a number of serious case reviews across the County that have highlighted the issue of children who are not brought (previously DNA) to health appointments as a result of parental neglect.

When a child DNA an appointment, the following read code (Child not brought to appointment Xab0Q) will be used instead of DNA read code. The issue will be accessed by a clinician and will be followed up as necessary.

FIRST LETTER (INFORMAL WARNING)

Date

Dear

Recently you have missed ---appointments, during the last few months. This equates to ---- minutes of clinician's time that was reserved for you.

This may have been an oversight on your part, but I need to bring to your attention that the practice now has a policy regarding missed appointments, and I enclose an explanation leaflet for you which explains the procedure.

If you have specific problems that you wish to discuss that are preventing you from informing us when you cannot attend an appointment, then please ring me on the above telephone number and I will try and help where I can.

Practices can remove patients from their list for regularly missing appointments. As we continue to monitor those patients who do not attend, please try to improve your appointment attendance in future, we do appreciate that on rare occasions it may be unavoidable. The 'did not attend' policy has been discussed with the Patient Participation Group and it was agreed that necessary actions will be taken here at Major Oak Medical Practice, if the same patients continue to fail to attend their appointments.

Please ensure you make every effort to attend your appointment or cancel it in advance, so it can be made available to someone who may need it.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely

Jacquie Mikhail
Practice Manager

SECOND LETTER (FORMAL WARNING)

Dear

Further to my previous letters dated _____ I have been made aware that you failed to attend another appointment on _____ .

As explained in the leaflet I sent you and on the practice website and the notice on display in the practice reception area, the practice regards repeated missed appointments very seriously and as a result this letter represents a formal warning that should a further appointment be missed you will be removed from the practice list without further notice.

If you would like to discuss the circumstances surrounding your appointments, please contact the reception supervisor on the above number.

Yours sincerely,

Practice Manager

NOTICE FOR RECEPTION AREA

PLEASE NOTE

Due to an increase in the number of wasted appointments through patient's failing to attend 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 may be 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

EXPLANATION LEAFLET



MISSED APPOINTMENTS

DUE TO THE NUMBER OF PATIENTS FAILING TO ATTEND FOR THEIR APPOINTMENT THIS MAY MEAN THAT YOU MAY NOT BE ABLE TO SEE THE DOCTOR ON THE DAY THAT YOU WISH TO.

IN AN ATTEMPT TO TRY AND RESOLVE THIS, THE PRACTICE HAS DEVELOPED THE FOLLOWING POLICY.

IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND APPOINTMENTS WITHOUT INFORMING US WE WILL WRITE TO YOU ASKING IF THERE ARE ANY SPECIFIC PROBLEMS PREVENTING YOU FROM LETTING US KNOW.

IF YOU REPEATEDLY FAIL TO ATTEND FOR APPOINTMENTS YOU WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE PRACTICE LIST AND HAVE TO FIND AN ALTERNATIVE GP PRACTICE.