

Practice Protocol			
Protocol Name:	Late Arrivals Protocol for GP/ANP Appointment		
Protocol Number:	Pro-021		
Date Written:	November 2020	Written By:	Tim Goldsbrough
Review Date:	Last: August 2025 Next: August 2026	Person Responsible:	Practice Manager
<p>Introduction</p> <p>This protocol sets out the procedure to follow where a patient:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is late for their appointment but is less than 10 minutes late for their GP/ANP appointment. • Is more than 10 minutes late for their GP/ANP appointment. <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephones at short notice to advise that they will be late, in which case the above provisions will apply. <p>If the patient is not checked in as 'arrived' on EMIS, at their allotted appointment time the clinician is to shout for the patient in the waiting room in case they have forgotten to check in or there has been an issue with the self-check in screen.</p> <p>General Policy</p> <p>Patients have a duty to attend for pre-booked appointments promptly, and to consider logistical difficulties or the time involved in travelling to the surgery.</p> <p>The practice will, as far as practicable, see patients who arrive late, however this may be at the end of surgery and may have a considerable wait depending what time their initial booked appointment is.</p> <p>It is generally inappropriate to delay patients who have arrived on time to accommodate earlier patients who have arrived late, however where an opportunity develops (for example where an earlier patient has been seen quickly and the GP/ANP becomes "ahead of time") it may be possible to see a late arrival in the gap.</p> <p>The practice will monitor and record the incidence of patients who are late for appointments within the clinical system. Persistent late attendees will have a phone call to understand any logistical barriers causing their persistent lateness and may be issued with a warning letter following this discussion if required.</p> <p>The Practice Leaflet/Patient Information procedures will incorporate a section advising patients that should they be late, it may not be possible for them to be seen, or that they may be seen only with a considerable wait.</p> <p>The following general provisions will apply:</p>			

Less than 10 minutes late

The patient will be marked as an arrival in their pre-booked “slot”. The doctor or nurse will call them in at the first next available opportunity. The patient should be advised of this and that there may be some delay while they are fitted in and to take a seat in the waiting room.

More than 10 minutes late

The patient will be advised that as they are a late arrival the GP/ANP will have to see punctual patients first, and that they will be seen at the end of the surgery and therefore may have a delay. Unless the GP/ANP has an unexpected gap. Where there is an indication of clinical urgency the GP/ANP will be notified so the patient can be seen earlier. The Patient Services Team Member on the front desk will confirm the patient’s details, review their reason for booking and check their medical notes to determine if they need seeing earlier than the end of surgery.

Where patients are over 20 minutes late, they can also be seen at the end of surgery by the GP/ANP. It is important that for patients over 20 minutes the Patient Services Team Member on the front desk confirms the patient’s details, reviews their reason for booking and check their medical notes to determine if they need seeing earlier than at the end of surgery. If the patient is unable or unwilling to wait, they should be offered another alternative appointment, and they leave with a solution.

The practice will not differentiate between patients who are persistent late attendees and other late attendees. This will be dealt with, should the need arise, by an initial discussion with the persistent late attendees at a later point.

Clinical System

Patients who arrive late should be coded in all cases as:

401278005 – Late for Appointment

This will enable individual patient review should this be appropriate.