

# Did Not Attend (DNA) and Late Patients Policy



## Introduction

It can sometimes be difficult to get a routine appointment with a GP or Nurse. In General Practice demand can be unpredictable, which cannot easily be remedied.

One factor which makes this more difficult to overcome is missed routine appointments due to did not attends (DNAs), or patients being late for their appointments.

Where patients' have been declined routine appointments because appointments are fully booked, it is at best disappointing when one of those booked appointments is unused due to a DNA, and no contact has been made with the practice to cancel the appointment so that it can be released for others **or** telephones so late as to make it impossible to allocate the appointment to another patient.

In 2015/16, there were **1681** such DNAs with either GPs or Nurses at Scartho Medical Centre and, in some cases, there were double appointments at specialist clinics. This is the equivalent of 7 full days of missed clinical appointments.

## What is a DNA?

A DNA occurs when an appointment is not attended and the patient has not contacted the Practice in advance to cancel it, or where the cancellation is so late as to make it impossible to allocate the appointment to another patient. The practice will code this DNA and this will prompt a retrospective check on the number of DNAs recorded against the individual.

## DNA Policy

*Applicable to DNAs within a 12 month period*

### DNA 1

Where this is the first occasion, a code will be added to the patient's medical record and the DNA counted in a monthly search.

### DNA 2

Where this is the second occasion, the patient will be contacted by the practice, advised of the missed appointment and a splash screen will be added to their record. When the patient makes a further appointment, they will be advised by the Receptionist that the practice is aware of their previous DNA and asked to confirm their intention to attend their next appointment. The patient will also be informed that if a further appointment is DNA'd, they could be at risk of compromising their relationship with the practice.

### **DNA 3**

Where a third DNA has occurred, the patients' usual GP will review the individual case and a decision will be taken with regards to the patient remaining at the practice. The practice will consider whether consistent failure to adhere to our DNA Policy constitutes a breakdown between the patient and the GP or whether there are extenuating circumstances, with consideration for an individual's clinical risk, vulnerability and whether clinical assistance is required. If the patients' usual GP determines that the patient should be removed from the practice list, the patient shall be notified in writing.

### **Children's DNAs**

Where children DNA their appointment, the practice will attempt to discuss the DNA with the child's parent(s) or guardian(s) in the first instance, to understand why the DNA has occurred.

Children's DNAs will be managed in accordance with the DNA Policy above, with the exception of children with safeguarding concerns. If there are any safeguarding concerns the relevant health professional, school nurse or Health Visitor will be contacted upon the first DNA. If a child with safeguarding concerns has 3 DNAs a referral to Children's Services may be considered.

### **Late Patients**

We understand that sometimes factors are outside of patients' control, and these in turn could result in patients being late for their appointment or them being unable to attend their appointment.

We ask that when patients' know that they are going to be late for their appointment; they make contact with us as soon as they can to inform us. The practice will undertake to see patients who are going to be late; however this will not be possible in all circumstances. By contacting us if you are going to be late, we can confirm whether we will still be able to go ahead with your appointment.

**SHOULD YOU NEED TO CANCEL, OR NOTIFY US THAT YOU ARE GOING TO BE LATE FOR YOUR APOINTMENT, HERE'S HOW:**

**Telephone:        01472 279500**

Either speak to our Reception Team, or follow the automated instructions (24 hours, 7 days a week) to cancel your appointment

***Do we have your updated mobile telephone number and consent to send you SMS appointment reminders?***