

DARWEN HEALTHCARE

Late Arrivals Protocol Policy HR026

Version	Review date	Edited by	Approved by	Comments
1	01/09/2014	Ann Neville	Business Manager	New Policy
2	01/09/2016	Ann Neville	Business Manager	Policy Reviewed
3	01/04/2019	Sue Hill	Business Manager	Policy Reviewed
4	01/04/2022	Ann Neville	Business Manager	Policy Reviewed
5	01/04/2024	Ann Neville	Business Manager	Policy Reviewed
6	01/04/2025	Ann Neville	Business Manager	Policy Updated
Next Due:	01/05/2027			

Introduction

This protocol sets out the procedure to follow where a patient:

- Attends less than 10 minutes late for their appointment
- Attends more than 10 minutes late but less than 20 minutes late for their appointment
- Attends more than 20 minutes late for their appointment
or
- Telephones practice at short notice to advise that they will be late, in this case the above provisions will also

Status

This document and any procedures contained within it are contractual and therefore form part of your contract of employment. Employees will be consulted regarding any modifications or change to the document's status.

General Policy

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.

The practice will, as far as practicable, see patients who arrive late, however this may be at the end of surgery and will therefore involve a considerable wait for those who do not wish to re-book however this should be determined by clinical need and the reason for the lateness. Management should be involved.

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 becomes "ahead of time") it may be possible to see a late arrival in the gap.

The practice will monitor and record the incidence of patients who are late for appointments within the clinical system. Persistent late attendees will be issued with a warning letter and added to the Late Attendees Spreadsheet if 20 Minutes late or more.

The 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.

The following general provisions will apply:

Less than 10 minutes late

The patient will be marked as arrived as normal on their pre-booked appointment slot.

More than 10 minutes, less than 20 minutes late

The patient will be advised that as they are a late arrival by reception, the receptionist will need to contact the clinician to advise that the patient has just arrived. The patient should be advised that they may have to wait until the end of surgery dependent on how busy the surgery is etc. but will try to facilitate as soon as possible.

More than 20 minutes late

The patient has clearly missed the appointment and may need to rebook. Where there is an indication of clinical urgency then the Management Team should be advised and a decision made if they can be seen.

The practice will not, at this stage, differentiate between patients who are persistent late attendees and others. This will be dealt with, should the need arise, by individual letter.