

DARWEN HEALTHCARE

Did not attend policy HR016

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1	01/12/2014	Ann Neville	Business Manager	New Policy
2	01/12/2016	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
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Introduction

During the covid pandemic the number of appointments within a 12-month period with a 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) code, i.e. the patient does not turn up for the appointment and does not contact the surgery in advance to cancel/change appointment had been considerably reduced. This was mainly due to appointments not being booked too far in advance, option of video and telephone appointments and reduced ability to book acute problems online. The effect of any "Did not attend" 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
- Risk of Patient removal from List

Also see *Removal of Patient from List policy* for up-to-date procedural guidelines.

General Policy

If a patient fails to attend an appointment the clinician or nurse will firstly contact the patient by telephone, if unable to speak with them by phone will send the patient a text message advising them, they have failed to attend an appointment.

If a patient fails to attend a face-to-face appointment or be available for a planned remote appointment on two occasions within a 12 month period, an informal warning text/letter/or call will be provided to the patient, advising them of the practice protocol that they are at risk or removal from the practice if they fail to attend a third appointment within a 12 month period.

If the patient fails to attend another face to face or be available for another planned remote appointment, a second Text/letter/telephone call will be completed advising that three appointments have been missed and the patient is at risk of being removed from the practice. This further missed appointment will require the matter to be discussed at a practice failed to attend meeting and a majority agreement will be reached as to whether the patient will be removed from the practice list as an 8-day rule.

Warning letters/Texts 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.

Screening Appointments

Where a patient with a chronic condition or is 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.

The responsible clinician (usually the doctor or the nurse holding the clinic) will be responsible for contacting them via telephone and documenting that within the patient record. A test message should be sent allowing the patient to respond.

Where a new appointment is arranged, the member of staff should explain the importance of attending this appointment.

The clinician will have overall responsibility for the individual patient follow-up and attendance, although the administration aspects may be delegated.

The DNA should be coded onto the clinical system at each non-attendance by the administrator as follows:

DNA Surgery Appointment SMS Text Sent
DNA Surgery Appointment 2nd SMS Text Sent

(If SMS Text is not appropriate then a letter can be sent instead)

As from May 2025 an administrator for ‘failed to attend Nurse Appointments’ and an administrator for ‘failed to attend GP appointment’ will be responsible for the issue of a weekly stats.

CONTINUES

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FIRST LETTER (INFORMAL WARNING)

Dear

I have noticed from our records that you failed to attend/be available for 1 or more appointments booked during the last 12 months.

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

If you have specific problems that you wish to discuss that are preventing you from informing us when you cannot attend for an appointment then please email me on darwen.healthcare@nhs.net or ring me on the telephone number below and I will try and help where I can. (01254 964640 Reception)

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

On behalf of
Darwen Healthcare GP Partnership

SECOND LETTER (FORMAL WARNING)

Dear

Further to my previous Text/letter/Call dated _____ I have been made aware that you failed to attend or be available for another appointment on

_____ .

As explained in the leaflet I sent you 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 are at risk of being removed from the practice list. Any decision relating to this will be discussed within the GP Partnership Meeting and recorded prior to any patient removal.

If you would like to discuss the circumstances surrounding your appointments please contact Kim Cunningham, Deputy Practice Manager or Ann Neville, Business Manager via 01254 964640

Yours sincerely,

On behalf of
Darwen Healthcare GP Partnership

For an example of a final removal letter please see Removal of Patient from List [*]

DARWEN HEALTHCARE

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

Darwen Healthcare 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 or consult with 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 or be available for virtual appointments booked 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 risk being removed from the practice list and have to find an alternative GP Practice.