



Overview and background

Most of our patients know it can sometimes be difficult to get a routine appointment with a GP or Nurse within a certain time frame. Where such demand is unpredictable, this cannot easily be remedied. One thing that makes this even more difficult to overcome is the problem of missed appointments – DNAs.

Where patients have been declined appointment because clinicians are fully booked, it is extremely disappointing when one of those booked appointments does not turn up and has not contacted the Practice to cancel the appointment so that it can be released and allocated to another patient.

The cost in time and money is a burden to the National Health Service generally and the Practice cannot sustain this. Please see the DNA Status Sheet posted in the waiting room.

Non-attendance and cancellations at short notice without a valid reason deprives other patients of essential medical services. In light of this, we have re-introduced this policy; Did Not Attend (DNA) for our patients.

What we aim to achieve by reducing DNAs?

By reducing the number of DNAs, the Practice will:

- Enhance the efficiency of clinical sessions
- Reduce costs
- Increase productivity
- Offer a more effective service to patients
- Enable more effective booking of slots

What does "Did Not Attend" mean?

A DNA occurs when:

- a face-to-face appointment is not attended
- or we were unable to reach a patient by telephone. Please note that we would make two attempts to contact you by phone if you opted for a telephone consultation.

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 that time to another patient who needs treatment.

The Practice will code this DNA and this will prompt a retrospective check on the number of DNAs recorded against that person. As such, the following applies

1st DNA

Where this is the first occasion, a code will be added to the patient's medical records, and the patient contacted by the most appropriate contact method (either text or letter), a note will also be added to the home screen of their medical record and the DNA counted in a monthly search.

2nd DNA

Where this is the second occasion, the patient will be contacted by the Practice, advised of their second missed appointment and informed that if a further appointment is DNA'd they could be at risk of compromising their relationship with the Practice.

3rd DNA

Where a third DNA has occurred within a 12 months period, the Practice will review the individual case and a decision will be taken with regard to addressing the patient's future ability to pre-book routine appointments. The Practice will consider whether consistent failure to adhere to our Practice policy constitutes a breakdown between the patient and the GP (where the GP Practice has given clear instruction on policy and service provision and the patient has chosen to disregard this on several occasions in spite of due warning). This ultimately could result in you being removed from the Practice List and you will need to register with an alternative Surgery.

It should be noted that, whilst unacceptable in most cases, there may be extenuating circumstances as to why the patient has failed to attend their appointment. Therefore, prior to any correspondence being sent to a patient, it would be reasonable to discuss this with their clinician.

Any correspondence sent to patients relating to DNA's are only valid for a 12-month period. All correspondence will be saved in each patient's electronic health records.

Please note that this policy applies to all patients registered at any of our surgeries.

How to Avoid Becoming a DNA

Preference of course, is for the Practice to know in advance so we can offer the appointment(s) to other patients in need.

Mistakes do happen and the Practice understand that appointments can be forgotten about or overlooked. However, each patient receives a text message confirmation of the appointment at the time of booking. If you are not receiving these please check with Reception to make sure we have the correct contact details for you.

Running late for your appointment?

One of reasons for GPs running late is that some patients do not attend on time. As much as we understand that on occasions patient may run late, we also have to ensure that those who arrived on time are seen on time.

Therefore, if you are more than 10 minutes late for your appointment you may not be seen and asked to rebook or asked to wait until the end of the surgery. This decision will lay with a clinician who you were booked with.

No Longer need or can attend your appointment?

Just please let us know so that we can offer this to other patients who may need our attention. You can do so by:

- Calling us on **0115930115**- option 2
- Via NHS App or SystemOnline access (please enquire at reception if you do not have access)
- Visiting us at any branch surgery.

Thank you for your support.