

Swallownest Health Centre – Did Not Attend (DNA) Policy

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PATIENTS DO NOT ATTEND (DNA)

They MISS AN APPOINTMENT

1. Background

Most of our Patients know it can sometimes be difficult to get a routine appointment with a GP or Nurse. In the course of events where demand is unpredictable, that cannot easily be remedied. However evening and weekend appointments are available in the HUBS. These appointments can be accessed by either calling Reception or via the Rotherham Health App. (on your smartphone or tablet).

One thing that makes this more difficult is the problem of missed routine appointments – DNAs.

Where Patients have been declined routine appointments because the consultations are fully booked, it is wasteful of resources 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 for others, or telephones so late as to make it impossible to allocate to another Patient.

In 2018, there were 5,816 such DNAs - with either GPs or Nurses and, in some cases, double appointments at specialist clinics.

The average cost of an appointment is £30, equating to £174,480.00 wasted NHS resource for 2018 alone. The cost in time and money is a burden to the National Health Service generally and the Practice in particular cannot sustain this and is committed to reducing the amount of appointments lost to DNA

Remember that your DNA is other Patient's denied appointment

2. What We As A Practice Are To Doing To Reduce DNAs

We have updated and are reminding our patients what our policy is, and we feel that it is important to enforce it robustly.

The Practice needs to put in place a system to improve services for Patients. Here is what we will endeavour to do to help you not become a DNA:-

- We will always write appointment details for Patients who make an appointment face to face at our reception desk. Our appointment slips contain our telephone number should Patients need to cancel (even at short notice).
- If you make an appointment over the telephone, we would suggest that Patients' record/document the date and time in a way that can be easily accessed – in a diary, on a calendar or for the more technically minded on a mobile phone. Our staff are trained to repeat all appointment details and clarify understanding with Patients at the time of making the appointment.

3. Purpose

Swallownest Health Centre is committed to ensuring that the best possible service is provided to all patients registered with the practice.

Patient non-attendance at a booked appointment adversely impacts on practice staff and its patients in the following manner:

The 'Did Not Attend' (DNA) patient takes the appointment slot of another patient who could have attended. The effect of this is an increase in the waiting time for appointments.

The resources used to follow up and re-book DNA patients diverts practice staff from other duties and is therefore a waste of resources.

Consistent application of the DNA policy by all practice staff (clinical and non-clinical) plays an important role in encouraging patients to assist in ensuring that Clinics are managed as efficiently as possible.

This policy relates the handling of DNA's and outlines the expectations of patients and staff in the management of these instances.

4. Responsibility

It is the responsibility of Swallownest Health Centre staff to make every reasonable effort to ensure that the patient is aware of their scheduled appointment.

Every effort will be made to communicate effectively with all patients including those with language, literacy and vision difficulties, and those who change address frequently.

The Practice will exercise discretion on a case-by-case basis to avoid disadvantaging patients in the case of genuine hardship, misunderstandings and other unavoidable circumstances.

It is the patient's responsibility to:-

- Notify Swallownest Health Centre of any change to their contact detail
- Attend their arranged clinic appointment or reschedule with reasonable advanced notice.

5. Policy

In the event that a patient does not attend (DNA) an appointment for the first time then the following process will be undertaken:

The appointment will automatically be recorded by the clinical system in the patient record as a DNA with a code. And at this point no further action will be taken other than recording the DNA in a monthly report.

If a patient does not attend (DNA) for two appointments within a 12 month period, they will be sent a Swallownest Health Centre DNA letter explaining that they did not attend their appointment and the effects it has on the practice and what will happen if the DNA a third time.

If the patient DNA's a third time within a 12 month period then a 2nd letter will be sent stating that their name will be removed from the practice list but giving them a 4 week time slot to contact the Practice Manager to discuss any specific problem preventing them from

cancelling appointments. **Before finally removing the patient, a check will be made with the GP.**

HOW TO AVOID BECOMING A DNA

If you cannot attend or no longer need an appointment, please contact us in advance.

Mistakes do happen and the Practice understands that appointments can be forgotten about or overlooked. In such cases, the Practice will take into account the reason given by Patients.

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

SHOULD YOU NEED TO CANCEL, HERE'S HOW:-

- **By telephone – appointments line 0114 4333888. We know this can be busy so to save time, try an alternative option as listed below.**
- **By text phone – many of our patients receive a text confirming their appointment, also an additional reminder text the day before the appointment. If you wish to cancel, please reply CANCEL as stated. The system will automatically cancel this for you. Please make sure that we have your correct contact details at all times.**
- **On our website – www.swallownesthealthcentre.co.uk**

#CAN'T KEEP IT, CANCEL IT! #USE IT, DON'T ABUSE IT

SOMEONE ELSE NEEDS THE APPOINTMENT!

To help us improve the system and make additional appointments available for patients to book routinely, please adhere to our Practice Policy.