



Please "Be kind" to our staff. A simple thank you, or a positive review could make the world of difference. Send any comments and feedback to Email: [roccg.swallownestcarecoordinators@nhs.net](mailto:roccg.swallownestcarecoordinators@nhs.net)

We will be closed from 12.00pm for training on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2024.



**COLORECTAL CANCER**

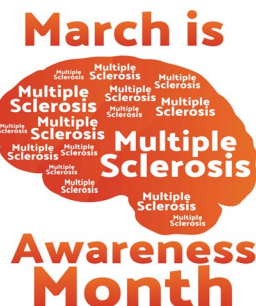
Location of colorectal tumors

**SYMPTOMS**

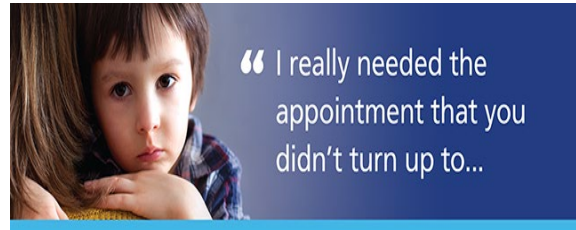
- bowel isn't empty
- abdominal discomfort
- fever
- fatigue
- loss appetite
- unexplained weight loss
- diarrhea or constipation
- blood in your stool

**PREVENTION**

- don't drink alcohol
- eat fruits, vegetables
- exercise most days of the week
- stop smoking



Swallownest Health Centre



GP appointment?  
Can't make it?  
Don't need it?



## Missed Appointments

Some patients are not keeping their appointments with the GP or nurse. Surgeries are particularly busy, so be sure to keep to your appointment time and cancel it if you need to; missed appointments waste precious GP or nurse time and resources.

## DNA'S

Did Not Attend' (DNA) i.e. when a patient does not turn up for the appointment and does not contact the surgery in advance to cancel/change appointment. The effect of these is:

An increase in waiting time for the routine appointments.

An increase of patients not being able to see a GP or nurse. Frustration for both staff and patients.

A waste of valuable resources.

## **Wasted Appointments**

We have noticed recently that we have had quite a few appointments wasted by patients not informing us that they are unable to attend. This does influence our other patients who do need to see a GP but are not able to due to the surgeries being fully booked.

Please remember that if you have booked an appointment and you know you are not going to be able to make it please contact the surgery and cancel that appointment. Hence freeing up this time for someone who may be in great need to see one of our GP's or Nurses.

If 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 a letter will be sent.

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 3rd 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.

**We have 20 patients on our watchlist who have DNA'd 3 or more appointments in a 12 month period which collates to 72 appointments wasted by these patients alone.**

## **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 consider the reason given by patients. Preference, of course, is for the Practice to know in advance (no less than 30mins before your appointment time) so we can offer the appointment(s) to other Patients in need.

**DNA's February Breakdown**  
Patients did not attend their appointments last month February 2024  
That's 166 of appointments which this month is 3%

### Here's the Breakdown

- GP appointments – **76**
- Paramedic - 1
- Nurse appoints – 10.
- HCA (blood/BP and other clinics) –**71**
- Minor Ailments PA's – 8
- Pharmacist – 0
- Misc – 0

**This is the equivalent to 38 hours of wasted time over 21 working days. That's around 2 hours a day!**

**To cancel an appointment please use the following options to allow someone else to use it.**

**call us on 0114 433 3888 the following options appear: -**

**Press 1 to cancel your appointment via an auto attendant.**

**Press 2 to speak to a Patient Services Advisor if you also need to rebook.**

**You can also cancel by emailing**

**[syicb-rotherham.swallownestnoreply@nhs.net](mailto:syicb-rotherham.swallownestnoreply@nhs.net)**

### GP surgery Frequently Asked Questions

**Why are there no appointments? And why does the Receptionist need to ask my Symptoms? These two queries are closely linked.**

Our appointments are formed into several groups. On the Day – some appointments are blocked so that there will always be access for people on the day who really need to see someone that day. Appointments are booked depending on your symptoms/issue. The Receptionist is now called a Care Navigator and has been trained to do just that. They are responsible for signposting you to the right service, this is not always a GP.

Nurse – e.g. wound checks/ injections - cuts and grazes or insect/animal bite/ stood on rusty nail etc.

Pharmacist - (both your local pharmacist and our in house pharmacist) e.g. Conjunctivitis/worms/mild pain /hay fever etc. (not under 5 or pregnant women)

Physiotherapist – sciatica/back pain/joint pain, sports injuries etc.

ANP – Advanced Nurse Practitioner. They will be able to help you with most minor illnesses and yes, they can prescribe! - E.g. cough/cold/rash/water infection/chest inf/asthma/ear pain and many, many more. (Not under 5 or pregnant women)

GP – More complex issues

ANP/GP - appointments at other local surgeries.

If all the on the day slots are full when you call don't worry! There is an on call GP every day for urgent cases, this may be assessed over the phone before you are added to the list.

If your needs are not urgent and we haven't been able to accommodate you immediately please be considerate and call back another day or try using 111

online or by phone. This is a great national service anyone can call 24hrs a day!

Pre-booked – These are appointments that you can book several weeks in advance for things that are not urgent such as reviews or results.

### **Why doesn't anyone answer the phone?**

We have a limited number of call handlers (on average about 4 at any one time) and the telephone system has been set up to only handle a limited number of calls. If too many people call at the same time such as Monday morning there will come a point when the calls waiting (15) exceed our capacity and you may be cut off, please try again in a few minutes.

Although our calls waiting list of 15 may seem small would you really want to be number 50 or 100? At least you know you will never be further down the queue than 15.

### **Why can't I order my prescription over the telephone?**

NHS England made the difficult decision to stop the taking of prescriptions over the telephone to minimise the risk of potential errors causing a significant event. We understand that this might not be popular with some patients, but we hope that you will understand that your safety is of paramount importance. We are encouraging all patients to sign up to online services (NHS APP or our own website).

### **Why can't I park my car?**

The building is owned and maintained by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. It is a shared facility in which the Health Centre is one of many tenants using space within it. We have one of the largest car parks in our PCN. There is no contractual obligation to provide parking for patients.

### **Why can't I stay with my GP when I have moved out of the area?**

As a Health Centre, we have a catchment area in which we allow patients to be registered with us. If you do not live within our catchment area, you will be deemed no longer clinically appropriate to be registered with us. Whilst we are sympathetic with regards to a patient's personal circumstances, we need to be fair and consistent in the way we treat all our current and previous patients. As we have not signed up to the NHS England out of Area Registration Scheme, we are not contractually obliged to accept any out of area registrations and the decision rests within our Practice policy.

See our website for the Boundary map with a postcode checker.

### **Why can't I see the GP or Nurse that I want to see?**

We understand and welcome continuity with regards to your health care. However, as our clinicians work different days and hours, sometimes it isn't always possible for you to see the clinician of your choice as quickly or as easily as you may like. All our clinical staff can access your medical records therefore they are still able to assist you with your continuous healthcare. All our GP's have their own small bank of review appointments, if the GP wants to see you, they will contact you with a link sent usually by text message.

### **Why do GP and nurse appointments run behind?**

Our GP appointments are 10 minutes. Lots of people are aware of this fact; but have you ever actually stopped to think how long that is? The answer is not long. And don't forget that the clock starts as soon as your name is called, so the 10-minute slot includes you walking into the doctor's room, taking off your coat, having your consultation, putting your coat back on, leaving and then the doctor writing up your notes and requesting various

investigations, etc. prior to calling in the next patient.

It's also worth mentioning that in an average surgery of 20 patients, spending just two extra minutes with each person leaves you well over half an hour late by the time your last patient rolls in.

### **Why can't the GP see me for my tooth problem?**

It never ceases to amaze us how many patients assume doctors are a free alternative to the dentist. GPs learn absolutely nothing about dentistry in their medical training. Put simply, doctors are not dentists. Dentists are dentists. Please don't show us your teeth if you want an informed diagnosis. We understand that access to a dentist is not the best at present, but emergency dentistry is available, call 111 for assistance if you do not have a dentist.

### **Why do I need a medication review?**

Getting your [medication](#) reviewed is not only important for you, but also allows the NHS to maintain a good level of service across the board. By regularly reviewing your medication, you can help the NHS save a considerable amount in terms of [wasted medication](#). Medicine waste accounts for £300 million in NHS costs per year, but regular reviews ensure that you are only prescribed what you really need. In addition, you can keep on top of any concerns you may have, or any changes that might reduce the effectiveness of your medication. It also gives your GP the opportunity to ensure that you are taking your medication correctly, as government statistics show that 50% of prescribed medicines are not taken as prescribed.

It is important to remember that even if you have been on the same medication for some time, changes can still take place which can reduce its effectiveness. For instance, you may have another medicine prescribed to you, in which case you need to be sure that both medicines are working well for you when used together. You may

start taking new supplements, develop other conditions, require antibiotics, or start noticing possible side-effects.

By keeping your medication regularly updated and reviewed, you can be sure that your medications are working as they should. In some cases, it may be that you no longer need to take medication, or it could be necessary to reduce or increase the amount you are taking. We now have Clinical Pharmacists in our surgery that perform most of these reviews by telephone.

### **Why didn't my Doctor give me a Prescription?**

Your Doctor is not just a gatekeeper for a prescription.

It is not all about the drugs. Remember the first tip. What you really want is an opinion, maybe a diagnosis, and only treatment if you need it. Sometimes when people go to their GP, they feel that it was a waste of time if they don't come away with a prescription. This is simply not true, the assessment evaluation and opinion of the clinician that a medication is not needed now are of great value.

Here's another thing. Why would you want to take a drug that you didn't need?

Do not be fooled by the better safe than sorry mentality. There is a risk associated with every course of action. Taking prescription medication can come with a risk. That's why if you want a prescription, someone qualified must decide if you need it. Someone qualified must decide if the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks. These risks vary from drug to drug, but as an example for commonly prescribed antibiotics they include side effects such as diarrhea, allergic reactions, thrush, rashes, and interactions with other medications. There is also the risk of increasing antibiotic resistance that comes with increased antibiotic prescribing and rising costs to the NHS.