

Failing to Attend /Late Cancellation of NHS Appointments Policy

Every year we lose valuable surgery time because of patients failing to attend their appointments, or cancelling at short notice. This makes it more difficult for us to accommodate our patients in need of urgent treatment, for existing patients to book appointments and for new patients to register here. It also cost the surgery a considerable amount of money.

NHS Patients

Under NHS regulations, we are unable to charge NHS patients who fail to attend for their appointments or who cancel at short notice (less than 48 hours notice is insufficient notice).

A patient who fails to attend their appointment or cancels at short notice, will be sent a letter (including this policy), warning them that they will lose their NHS entitlement here, if they fail to attend or cancel at short notice again within a 3 year period. In the event that a further appointment is missed or cancelled at short notice within this 3 year period, we will withdraw the offer of NHS treatment at this practice. Should they wish to remain a patient here, they will need to register here on a private basis.

Discretion may be used if there is a good reason for the appointment being missed.

As with all medical facilities, we aim to see our patients on time but due to the nature of health care, this is not always possible. However, if a patient turns up late for their appointment so that treatment cannot be carried out, this will be regarded as failing to attend.

New NHS Patients

We have had a very high percentage of new NHS patients, often whole families, failing to attend their appointments. New patients who fail to attend their first appointment or cancel it at short notice, will no longer be seen at this practice as NHS patients. Should they wish to remain a patient here, they will need to register here on a private basis.

NHS Patients Attending Appointments for Private Treatment

To cover the surgery running costs a charge of £1.50 per minute will be made for private treatment appointments that have been missed or cancelled at short notice. *(For example, a missed 30 minute appointment will incur a charge of £45.)*

Text and Email Reminders

Text and email reminders are available for all appointments. If we have your mobile phone number and email on file, reminders can be sent to you a few days before and on the morning of your appointment. All messages sent by our system are logged when successfully sent. It is your responsibility to check your messages and to ensure that we are informed of any changes to your contact details. We will assume that you have received your reminders if it has been logged as successfully sent.

Please note, messages are sent out of courtesy, not necessity. It is your responsibility to turn up on time for an appointment. Failure of the messaging system for any reason is not sufficient reason for failing to attend or turning up too late for treatment.

This policy does not affect your ability to seek NHS care at another NHS practice.