

**MILE OAK MEDICAL CENTRE**  
**DNA POLICY**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document sets out the surgery policy on our patients' DNAs of practice and secondary care appointments.

### **Policy Statement**

We intend to facilitate maximum attendance for all our patients within the practice and for external appointments to ensure they receive the best care in the timeliest way to promote excellent recovery in both health and wellbeing.

### **Practice Appointment - Administration**

- Ideally practice appointments should not be booked more than 2 weeks in advance to aid memory and not waste appointments for resolved medical issues resulting in non-cancelled appointments.
- Patients should be reminded / encouraged to provide up-to date mobile phone numbers to allow SMS text reminders to be sent 48 hours prior to any appointment.
- Patients making appointments at the practice should be given a written appointment card and reminded to cancel as soon as possible before their appointment if the appointment is no longer required.
- Vulnerable patients should have a telephone appointment added to the reception calls for staff to call and remind of urgent/essential appointments.
- Patients who arrive over 7 minutes later for their appointment should be triaged for urgency and the Clinician consulted before they are turned away/rebooked.

### **Practice Appointments not attended**

- Appointments not attended are reviewed on a daily basis by the clinician concerned. Those with a clinical need to be seen (e.g. follow-ups) are contacted by telephone (by clinician or reception) and encouraged to rebook and attend. If the patient refuses, the clinician must be informed in order to take action if required.
- If a patient fails to attend a pre-booked appointment on one occasion, an informal warning letter will be sent to the patient (Appendix A). This letter will

be printed by the Duty Receptionist and posted to the patient (we may choose to email patients in the future instead).

- If the patient fails to attend another appointment within a 12-month period, a formal warning letter will be sent reminding them that should they miss another appointment they risk being removed from the practice list (Appendix B). Patients at this stage will also be considered for extra support in attending appointments e.g. same day call reminders.
- If the patient fails to attend 3 appointments within a 12-month period, this patient's details will be brought to the registered GP's attention by David Grant. Their GP will make a decision as to whether the patient is removed from the list after they are reviewed for vulnerability.
- Warning letters are only valid for a period of 12 months, removal based on warning greater than 12 months old will be invalid. In such a scenario only the DNA appointments within a 12-month period may be reviewed to determine which stage of the policy should be applied.
- Weekly DNA searches will be performed and reception will send out the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> DNA letters and inform David Grant if a 3<sup>rd</sup> one is needed.

### **Removing Patients from the Practice List**

This decision can only be made in consultation with a GP. Removal of a patient from the registered list for repeatedly failing to attend appointments will be in accordance with The NHS General Medical Service Regulations 2015 (Sch3)(24)(8)(b). This regulation requires that the patient has been warned that they are at risk of removal and that the reasons for removal have been explained to the patient. The practice must keep a written record of the removal of any patient from its list including the reason for removal, the circumstances of the removal and the grounds for removal. If the decision is made to remove the patient from the registered list, the GP should write to the patient explaining them of the practice decision and advising them to register with an alternative practice (Appendix C)

Once a decision has been made, reception will need to inform NHS England and request the deduction of the patient from the registered list. The patient will be deducted on the eighth day after NHS England has been notified (GMS Reg2015(24)(8)(b)).

## **Hospital Appointments not attended**

- The Practice Administrator will review all incoming letters from Secondary Care and the DNA will be coded within the clinical record.
- All paediatric DNAs will be forwarded to the patient's own clinician to see if any action is required for safeguarding purposes (such as contacting the parents/carer or referring to the safeguarding team, health visitors or the school nurse).
- All 2WW referrals will be forwarded urgently to the patient's own GP, or another GP if their own GP is away that day.
- If the hospital letter states another appointment will be sent to an adult patient, no further action will be taken.
- If the hospital is discharging the patient, the letter will be forwarded to the patient's own GP to review the medical record and assess the patient need for further action.
- If it is assessed that there is a requirement for the patient to be seen, the letter will be passed to the Secretary to make contact with the patient, by telephone or letter and arrange a re-referral if required. If the patient refuses, the clinician must be informed in order to take action if required.

## Appendix A: Informal Letter to Patients who misses an appointment

Dear <<Patient>>,

According to our records you had an appointment booked with <<Clinician's name>> on <<Insert date/time>> but did not attend for the appointment. If this is incorrect please can you notify the practice.

As I am sure you can appreciate, there is a large demand on appointments at the practice. This appointment could have been used by another patient if you had informed the practice that you no longer required to be seen.

The practice has a policy on patients not attending appointments, which in extreme cases can result in the patient being removed from our practice list.

If you wish to cancel appointments in future, you can do so by either telephone (01273 426200), by signing in to your online services (please speak to reception if you have not yet signed up to this), by emailing the surgery at least one working day before your appointment on: [bhccg.mileoakmedicalcentre@nhs.net](mailto:bhccg.mileoakmedicalcentre@nhs.net) or by visiting reception in person. Appointments should be cancelled as soon as possible and definitely more than 2 hours before your appointment time.

Please help us to utilise our appointments as best as possible by cancelling any future appointments that you do not need.

Many thanks for your co-operation

Yours sincerely,

<<Practice Manager>>

## **Appendix B: Formal Letter for patients who have missed a 2nd appointment**

Dear <<Patient>>,

According to our records you had an appointment booked with <<Clinicians name>> on <<Insert date/time>> but did not attend for the appointment. If this is incorrect please could you notify the practice.

We previously wrote to you on <<Insert Date>> as you had also missed an appointment on <<Date/Time>>. This is now the second occasion since 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 that you have not attended an appointment and have not cancelled this appointment. The practice has made cancelling appointments as easy as possible either online (please speak to reception if you have not yet signed up for this), by phone (on 01273 426200), by emailing [bhccg.mileoakmedicalcentre@nhs.net](mailto:bhccg.mileoakmedicalcentre@nhs.net) at least one working day before your appointment, or by visiting reception.

This letter is to inform you that should you miss another appointment without cancellation; the practice may remove you from the practice list, as this would be deemed a breakdown in the doctor patient relationship.

Please help us to utilise our appointments effectively by cancelling any future appointments immediately upon realising you do not need it, or cannot attend the booked time. This must be done at least 2 hours before your appointment time so that the appointment can be used by another patient.

Yours sincerely,

<<Practice Manager>>

## Appendix C: Removal of a Patient from the list due to repeated DNAs

Dear <<Patient>>,

According to our records you had an appointment booked with <<Clinicians name>> on <<Insert date/time>> but did not attend for the appointment. If this is incorrect please could you notify the practice.

We previously wrote to you on <<Insert Date>> and <<Insert Date>> as you had also missed two appointments on <<Date/Time>> and <<Date/Time>>. This is now the third occasion since 1<sup>st</sup> December 2019 that you have not attended appointments and have not cancelled them.

I have reviewed your clinical records and see no reason why you should not have been able to cancel these appointments. In accordance with our practice policy and NHS General Medical Service Regulations 2015(Sch3)(24)(8)(b), the practice will be removing you from our patient list. The practice has notified NHS England of this on <<Insert Date>>. You will be removed from our practice list on the eighth day following this notification to NHS England.

We would recommend that as a priority you register with another local practice who will hopefully be able to help you with your health needs. A list of local practices can be found at [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk), there is a search facility available on the home page of this site that, by entering your post code, you will be able to find a list of local practices.

I would like to take this opportunity to say that as a practice we do not take the decision to remove a patient from our list lightly, but need to ensure that we are able to provide for all of our registered patient population to the best of our ability. This is made more difficult if a patient repeatedly misses appointment without cancellation.

I wish you the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,

<<Senior GP>>