

# CASTLE PRACTICE

## WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PATIENTS DNA – DO NOT ARRIVE (DNA)

### They MISS AN APPOINTMENT

#### 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.

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

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

In 2018, there were over 1,500 such DNAs - with either GPs or Nurses and, in some cases, double appointments at specialist clinics. This is the equivalent of 7 full days of missed clinical appointments.

The cost in time and money is a burden to the National Health Service generally and the Practice in particular cannot sustain this.

Remember that your DNA is other Patient's denied appointment.

#### DNA Policy

A DNA occurs when an appointment is not attended 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. Whilst we are primarily concerned with our own appointment observance, consideration may also be given to any hospital appointments where we have been notified that a Patient has failed to attend. A re-referral on the part of the GP (more GP time) will often be required by the hospital department so that the Patient can be recalled.

## **DNA 1**

Where this is the first occasion, a code will be added to the Patient's medical record and the DNA counted in a monthly search.

## **DNA 2**

Where this is the second occasion, the Patient will be contacted by the Practice, advised of the missed appointment and a splash screen will be added to their record. When the Patient makes a further appointment, they will be advised by the Receptionist that the Practice is aware of their previous DNA and asked to confirm their intention to attend their next appointment. The Patient will also be informed that if a further appointment is DNA'd, they could be at risk of compromising their relationship with the Practice.

## **DNA 3**

Where a third DNA has occurred, 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).

## **HOW TO AVOID BECOMING A DNA**

If you cannot attend or no longer need an appointment, please ring 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:-**

- A** By telephone – appointments line 028 9331 5805 (we know this can be busy so to save time, try B or C)
- B** By text phone – simply text your name and appointment details and we will cancel it for you – Text 07757 100 878
- C** On our website – [www.castlepractice.co.uk](http://www.castlepractice.co.uk)

## **What We As A Practice Are To Doing To Reduce DNAs**

We are reminding the general public what our policy is and we feel that it is important to enforce it robustly.

It has been suggested and discussed with the Health & Social Care Board that the Practice puts in place a system to improve services for Patients. We are currently reviewing our emergency appointments and routine appointments availability. Here is what we will endeavour to do to help you not become a DNA:-

- We will always print appointment details for Patients who make an appointment face to face at our reception desk. Our appointment slips contain our text 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.

**KEEP IT OR CANCEL IT!**

**SOMEONE ELSE NEEDS THE APPOINTMENT!**

To help us improve the system and make available over 1,500 appointments this year for Patients to book routinely, please adhere to our Practice Policy.