**Cowdenbeath Medical Practice**

**Appointment DNA Policy**

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 appointments.

Where Patients have been unable to make routine appointments because they are fully booked, it is very frustrating 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.

In 2024 there were over 2500 such DNAs, and in some cases, double appointments at specialist clinics.  This is the equivalent of **108 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 another Patient’s denied appointment.***

**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.

The Practice will code this DNA and this will prompt a retrospective check on the number of DNA(s) recorded against that Patient.

The process for managing appointment DNA(s) by the Practice is as follows;

1. Where this is the third occasion, the Practice will contact the patient by letter to advise of the missed appointments and a note will be added to their records.
2. Where this is the fourth occasion, the Practice will contact the patient by letter for the second time to advise of further missed appointments and a note will be added to their record.

1. Where there is a further DNA, the Practice will issue a final written warning letter. Any further DNA(s) following receipt of this letter will be discussed with the GP Partners and action determined however, at this point the patient may be removed from the Practice list.

**How to Avoid Appointment DNA(s);**

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 is How;**

By telephone 01383 518500 during the hours of 8:00am-5:30pm. During times when the Practice is closed there is an option to leave a short message which the Reception team will check when the Practice re-opens.

To help us improve the appointment system, please adhere to our Practice Policy.

**Text Reminder Service**

The Practice operates a text reminder service which will send a text message to any Patient with an upcoming appointment 48 hours before their appointment time. This service will also allow our Patients to cancel appointments by replying ‘CANCEL’ to the reminder text message.

It is important that our Patients ensure that their contact details are up-to-date to ensure that these reminders are received. Should Patients wish to opt out of this service at anytime this can be done by notifying the Practice.