**DID NOT ATTEND POLICY**

**INTRODUCTION**

Our ‘Did Not Attend’ (DNA) relate to when an adult patient (over the age of 18) does not turn up for a pre-booked appointment with a health professional and does not contact the surgery in advance to cancel or change the appointment. This policy relates to the handling of DNAs and outlines the expectations of patients and staff in the management of these instances.

Many valuable appointments are missed every month. The effects of these are:

* An increase in waiting time for appointments for everyone
* A potential risk to the health of the patient
* A waste of resources including cost to the NHS
* Frustration for both staff and patients

Hathaway Medical Centre is committed to ensuring that the best possible service is provided to all patients registered with the practice and therefore if a patient is unable to attend an appointment it is vital they contact the surgery as soon as they are aware, to make it available for another patient.

It is quick and easy to cancel an appointment:

· Call the cancellation line on 01249 – 462775, option 1

· NHS App – available 24 hours a day

· Via the original SMS booking link

**IMPROVING ATTENDANCE**

Consenting to receive notifications via SMS or one of the NHS-approved apps means patients can receive confirmation of appointments and can help them remember to attend appointments. On request, practice staff can document the details of the upcoming appointment(s) on an appointment card.

**THE POLICY**

Every time a patient fails to attend an appointment it is recorded in their electronic patient record and a monthly search on our computer system will be performed by the surgery to identify patients who have not turned up for appointments that month.

DNA WARNING LETTER 1: If a patient fails to attend two or more pre-booked appointments within a 6 month period, they will be sent a letter from the practice detailing the appointments that were missed, the various ways of contacting the surgery to cancel their appointments in future along with a copy of this policy, and information regarding the next steps should a further appointment be missed within the next 6 months following this letter. No further action will be taken at that stage.

DNA WARNING LETTER 2: If the same patient fails to attend another pre-booked appointment within 6 months of the first letter being sent, they will be sent a second letter from the practice detailing the appointments that were missed, the various ways of contacting the surgery to cancel their appointments in future along with a copy of this policy for their information, and that if a further pre-booked appointment is missed within 6 months of the second letter being sent, their registration with the practice will be reviewed and they may be removed from our list. No further action will be taken at that stage.

Each warning letter is valid for a period of 6 months.

If the same patient fails to attend another pre-booked appointment within 6 months of the second letter being sent, their registration will be reviewed by the management and GP team at the practice meeting. If not deemed to be in an “at risk” group, the patient will be notified in writing with a third letter.

DNA LETTER 3:  This final letter will contain details of the non-attendances and to inform the patient that their registration has been reviewed and they will be removed from our practice list after 4 weeks if they have not in this time registered with another GP surgery. The letter will provide information on how to register with an alternative GP surgery.

If after 4 weeks of sending the final letter the patient has not registered with another GP surgery, they will be deducted from the practice register.

**PATIENTS WHO ARE DEEMED AT RISK OF WORSENING HEALTH**

We recognise that some patients have medical conditions or circumstances which makes attending appointments much more difficult and they are deemed to be at risk of worsening health if not seen by a health professional. This is why each case is reviewed by management and GP team before a final decision is made.