



Missed Appointment Policy

○ **This applies to patients over the age of 16 years**

For anyone under 16 years please see RHMG Missed Appointment - Under 16 years of age protocol

Riverside Highland Medical Group is committed to ensuring that the best possible service is provided to all patients registered with us at all of our Practices.

As with many other GP surgeries we are experiencing a high level of demand for our services.

We understand that it can sometimes be difficult to get a routine appointment. One thing that makes this increasingly difficult to overcome is the problem of Missed Appointments (also referred to as a DNA - *Did Not Attend*).

A pre-booked telephone consultation where the telephone call is unanswered and the clinician is unable to make contact with the patient may also be considered to be a Missed Appointment.

It is disappointing when an appointment is not utilised when a patient does not turn up and has not contacted the Practice to cancel the appointment in order for it to be re-allocated.

Patient non-attendance at a booked appointment adversely impacts on Practice staff and its patients in the following manner:

- The missed appointment patient takes the appointment slot of another patient.
- Increases waiting time for appointments.
- The time and personnel required to follow-up and rebook missed appointments diverts Practice staff from other duties.

A Missed Appointment occurs when:

- An appointment is not attended.
- The patient has not contacted the Practice in advance to cancel.
- Where the cancellation is so late that it makes it impossible to allocate that time to another patient who may need it.

In order to reduce the amount of missed appointment that occur, RHMG will monitor the number of times a patient misses an appointment.

Each time an appointment is missed communication will be sent, either by sms or letter, to the patient advising them that they have missed an appointment and emphasise the importance of attending or cancelling appointments.

Recording Missed Appointments

At each occasion that a patient misses an appointment, a code will be added to the patients' medical records detailing the missed appointment/ DNA.

The following working day, the practice will contact the patient, either by sms or letter, to advise them that they have missed the appointment and to reiterate the importance of attending or cancelling the appointment.

The number of missed appointments will be monitored over a rolling 12 month period and reviewed accordingly.

Trigger Point

If a patient hits the trigger point (three missed appointments in a twelve month period), the management team will be informed and patient's medical record will be reviewed from a compassionate and empathetic perspective.

At this stage the management team may wish to contact the patient's registered/ usual GP for further discussion at a team meeting. A decision will be made as to the required outcome/ actions to be taken, if any.

The Practice may send a letter to the patient advising them of the situation and give opportunity for the patient to provide and information they feel may be relevant.

The Practice will contact the patient within 28 days with the outcome/ objectives of the management meeting; this could result in a meeting at the practice or a devised, individual management plan.

The purpose of this meeting / plan is to establish a relationship with patient that will encourage better engagement with our services and minimise the number of missed appointments.

Failure To Adhere

If the patient continued to fail to engage with the practice following discussions their case will be referred onto the RHMG GP Partners for their decision.

This may include removal from the practice list as a last resort.

GP Partners

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RHMG Practices

Riverside Medical Practice, Inverness | Loch Ness & Strathnairn Medical Practice, Foyers | Cromarty Medical Practice, Cromarty | Dunedin Medical Practice, Inverness