

M. Newland & Associates Dental Practice

Appointment Cancellation and Did Not Attend Policy

We are committed to providing patients with high-quality dental care in a respectful, safe and efficient environment. To help us make the best use of clinical time and offer appointments to patients who need them, we ask all patients to attend appointments on time or cancel with sufficient notice if they are unable to attend.

If you have feedback about our service, please complete a suggestion leaflet or speak to Matthew Newland, the Practice Principal. We welcome feedback because it helps us continue to improve the care we provide.

Your responsibilities as a patient

We ask that all patients treat our staff with dignity and respect. Harassment, abuse, violence or offensive language towards any member of the dental team will not be tolerated. Where this occurs, the Practice Principal may take action, which may include declining to provide further treatment at the practice.

How to cancel an appointment

If you cannot attend your dental appointment, please telephone the practice on 01443 223514 at least 24 hours before your appointment time.

Providing notice allows us to offer the appointment to another patient and helps reduce waiting times. It also helps us avoid wasted clinical time and make the best use of our dental resources.

Private appointments cancelled at short notice or missed

Private dental appointments that are missed or cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice may incur a fee. Where less than 24 hours' notice is given, we may charge £100 per hour.

NHS appointments cancelled at short notice or missed

If more than two NHS dental appointments are missed or cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to complete the patient's NHS treatment. In some circumstances, we may also decide not to offer further treatment at the practice.

What counts as a Did Not Attend appointment?

A Did Not Attend appointment, also known as a DNA, is when a patient does not attend their appointment and has not told the practice beforehand. It also includes appointments cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice.

Missed appointments have a significant impact on the practice and on other patients. When a patient does not attend, the dentist and nurse have reserved clinical time that cannot easily be offered to someone else at short notice.

We understand that patients may occasionally forget or be unable to attend an appointment due to unexpected circumstances. However, repeated missed appointments affect access for other patients and may lead to further action under this policy.

Purpose of this policy

- Reduce the number of missed appointments.
- Encourage patients to cancel in good time if they cannot attend.
- Understand common reasons why appointments are missed.
- Support patients who repeatedly miss appointments to find practical solutions where possible.
- Make more appointment time available for patients who need dental care.

What happens after a missed appointment?

If you miss an appointment or cancel with less than 24 hours' notice, this may be recorded on your patient record as a Did Not Attend appointment. We may contact you by telephone or in writing to understand why the appointment was missed and to explain any fee, decision or next step relating to your care.

- Patients who repeatedly miss appointments may receive a letter from the practice.
- Where missed appointments continue, the dentist or Practice Principals may decide not to offer further appointments or treatment at the practice.
- Any decision will be based on the circumstances, the patient's appointment history and the impact on clinical time.

Appeals

- If you believe a missed or late-cancelled appointment has been recorded incorrectly, or if there were exceptional circumstances, you may appeal the decision in writing to the practice.
- Your appeal should explain what happened and include any relevant information you would like us to consider.
- The practice will review the appeal and respond as appropriate.