



## 'Failure to Attend' (FTA) and Late Cancellation Policy

The policy regarding failed appointment fees and attendance at our practice is designed to ensure the efficient and fair operation of our services, as well as to uphold the standards and guidelines set forth by the National Health (Dental Charges) Regulations 2005 and the NHS (General Dental Services) Regulations 2005. We take patient attendance seriously to maximize our capacity and ensure timely and appropriate care for all.

1. **Settlement of Failed Appointment Fees for Private Patients.:** Patients who have missed their appointments or have not cancelled or rescheduled with at least 24 hours' notice will be subject to a failed appointment fee. This fee must be settled before any further appointments can be offered. This policy ensures that patients who have previously missed appointments are held accountable for their missed commitments before they can book future appointments.
2. **Cancellations by Email or Text Message:** We kindly request that patients do not cancel their appointments via email or text message, as these communication methods are not screened daily. This policy is in place to ensure that appointment cancellations are properly managed and accounted for, as missed notifications may lead to disruptions in our scheduling.
3. **Definition of 'Failure to Attend' (FTA):** FTA is defined as patients who either miss their appointments or fail to cancel or reschedule them at least 24 hours in advance, except in cases of exceptional circumstances, which are at the discretion of the practice. This definition aligns with the regulatory requirements under the National Health (Dental Charges) Regulations 2005.
4. **Documentation of FTAs:** All instances of patients failing to attend their appointments will be meticulously documented in their patient files or records. This documentation helps in maintaining a clear record of attendance and compliance with regulations.
5. **1st Failure to Attend:** When a patient misses their first appointment, we will initiate a verbal communication with the patient. During this communication, the patient will be given the opportunity to reschedule the appointment. Furthermore, our reception staff will advise the patient that repeated failures to attend appointments could result in refusal of the completion of their NHS course of treatment, in accordance with NHS regulations and General Dental Service Regulations 2005, Schedule 3 Part 1 (5).
6. **2nd Failure to Attend:** In the case of a second or subsequent failure to attend appointments, especially if they occur without providing the required 24-hour notice, the practice may view this as an irrevocable breakdown in the patient-provider relationship. Under the NHS (General Dental Services) Regulations 2005, Schedule 3 Part 1 (5), the practice may consequently refuse further NHS treatment to the patient. This measure is put in place to ensure the fair allocation of resources and the efficient provision of dental services to patients who honour their appointments and responsibilities.

In summary, our failed appointment and attendance policy is aimed at promoting accountability, ensuring the efficient use of our resources, and adhering to regulatory requirements. We believe that these guidelines will enable us to provide the best possible care to all our patients while maintaining the integrity of our practice and the broader healthcare system.



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