

Helping you to
re-write the
S.C.R.I.P.T

S

Solutions

C

Challenges

R

Resilience

I

Innovation

P

Productivity

T

Transformation

TOP TIPS

How to get the best from your Appointments



This edition will focus on getting the most out of your appointments. It will provide some useful tips around managing DNAs, as the length of time patients have to wait for an appointment is a topical issue for most practices. It also provides tips for patients to help them get the most from their appointment.

DNAs:

Please see below some suggestions for managing DNAs:

- If a patient DNAs 3 times or more within a set period (suggest this is over 6 months) it may be useful to send a letter to them, excluding the ones who are significantly unwell or DNA due to medical conditions. Within the letter this can highlight the time that has been wasted that other patients who are unwell could have used. It is also worth mentioning that if this continues they may be asked to register with another practice.
 - Click on this link for an example [letter](#) kindly shared by Arnewood Practice
- Display a poster in the waiting room stating the number of appointments wasted and what the equivalent is of GP/Nurse time. It may be worth including how much this would cut down the wait for appointments.
 - Click on this link for an example of a [poster](#) that Sharon Prior from the Royal Manor Health Care Centre has agreed to share.
 - Click on this link for an example of a [populated poster](#).
- There are various ways of displaying messages to patients around DNAs and could be added to the following:
 - *Practice Website*
 - *Jayax Board*
 - *Television Screen in Waiting Room*
 - *Newsletter dedicated to DNAs*
- Most clinical systems have the ability to send text reminders for appointments, these are usually sent the day before and can help to reduce DNAs.

Top Tips for Patients:

The following provides some tips for patients to help them get the most from their appointment. This could be added in your practice leaflet, newsletter, website, waiting room etc:

- **Ask yourself:** How important is it that I'm seen quickly, or would I be better waiting for an appointment with a particular GP? If you have a long-term condition you'll probably benefit from a GP who knows you. Do I really need to see the GP or could the nurse or pharmacist help me?
- **Don't be put off by a GP who runs late** – they may be spending needed time with patients. One day you may appreciate them running late for you.
- **It's tempting to bring a list of unrelated problems**, but consider what's achievable in 10 minutes. 4 problems in 10 minutes - that's 150 seconds each. It's often better to come back again and spend more time on a problem rather than squeeze as many as you can into one ten minute appointment.
- **Before you see the GP**, work out in your own mind what you're worried about, and highlight any particular concerns. Consider preparing short notes, including how you would describe your symptoms.
- **Get to the point**, don't beat about the bush and don't keep important issues until the end.
- **Wear accessible clothing** if you're likely to need to undress for examination.
- **Make sure you understand what happens next, if you are not sure** ask to go through the plan again.
- **Have your say and get your views heard;** join our patient participation group.

Your input is welcome!!

Contact the LMC Office with your Campaign ideas/suggestions:

office@wessexlmcs.org.uk