

DNA National Guidance Document



National Guidance Document
Scheduled Care Reform Initiatives
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1.0 Definition

1.1 Did Not Attend (DNA)

Where a patient has been issued with an appointment and fails to attend, it is classified as a 'Did Not Attend' (DNA).

2.0 General Guidance

2.1 The Purpose of the New DNA Management Strategy

The purpose of implementing the new DNA management strategy is to create an end-to-end management system that aims to reduce non-attendance for scheduled appointments.

2.2 The Key Principles of the New DNA Management Strategy

Key principles of the DNA management strategy include:

- Key Communication Messaging

All communication should include the information required to cancel or rearrange their appointment if necessary. All appointment communications sent to patients should highlight impact to them if they fail to attend, the impact of unused appointments on other patients and the cost of unused appointments to the HSE. These messages have been tailored to change patient behaviour away from non-attendance towards contacting hospitals where they either can't attend, no longer need to attend their scheduled appointments or were not planning on attending towards contacting the hospital to notify them or towards attendance.

- Standardisation of Communication Timelines

The standardisation of communication timelines for initial appointment notification and for reminder communications is designed to give patients optimal notice for their appointment to ensure attendance.

- Adherence to the National Outpatients Waiting List Protocol Timelines

The National Outpatients Waiting List Protocol outlines should be adhered to for patients who DNA.

2.3 The Benefits of the New DNA Management Strategy

Key benefits of implementing the new DNA management strategy:

- Reduction in non-attendance rates at OPD clinics
- Increased attendance rates at OPD clinics
- Reduced burden on administrative resources in processing DNAs

3.0 How to Implement the New DNA Management Strategy

3.1 Inclusion of Key Messaging to Reduce Non-attendance

The key messages to include in all correspondence to patients regarding their appointments are:

3.1.1 Give patients the information required to cancel or rearrange their appointment if needed: Ideally a phone number and email address should be provided to make it as easy as possible for patients to cancel or reschedule appointments if needed. The easier the process the more likely patients are to do so.

3.1.2 Highlight the cost of missed appointments to the HSE: This helps convey the impact to the tax payer of a missed appointment and shows that even though the patient does not pay for their public appointment there is still a value to it. The aim of communicating this is to play on people's civic values to consider the impact of their actions of not turning up for their appointment

3.1.3 Highlight that other people could use the appointment if they no longer need it:

There are other people on the waiting list who would be able to be seen earlier if the patient's appointment was given to them instead. The intent of stating this in the letters to patients is to encourage them to think empathically towards other patients and, as a result, make the hospital aware of their intent not to attend their appointment allowing the hospital to offer it to another person.

3.1.4 Highlight the impact of non-attendance on the patient themselves: It is vital to make them aware that if they DNA they may be removed from the waiting list and be discharged back to their GP as per the National Outpatient Waiting List Management Protocol 2022.

3.2 Standardise Timelines

Initial appointment letters should be sent 6 weeks prior to a patient's appointment. A follow-up reminder communication should be sent 2 weeks prior to a patient's appointment. Additional reminder communications can be sent closer to the appointment date at each hospital's discretion.

3.3 Adherence to the National Outpatients Waiting List Protocol Timelines

In-line with the national protocol, routine patients who do not attend their appointments should be discharged and urgent or semi-urgent patients should be reviewed and discharged if appropriate.

4.0 Supporting Documents

4.1 OPD Appointment Letter



<Patient Name>

<Address Line 1>

<Address Line 2>

<Address Line 3>

MRN: <number>

Date of Birth: <DD/MM/YYYY>

Date: <DD/MM/YYYY>

Outpatient Appointment Letter

Dear <Insert Patient Name>,

An appointment has been arranged for you to attend <Insert Clinician Name>, <Insert Speciality> outpatient clinic in <Insert Hospital Name> on:

Appointment Date: DD/MM/YYYY

Time: HH:MM

If you are unable to attend or if you wish to cancel this appointment, please contact the Hospital immediately so that **your appointment can be offered to another patient:**

Email <Insert> or by phone on <Insert>

In line with the National Outpatient Waiting List Protocol 2022,

you may be removed from the Outpatient Waiting List for this speciality if you do not attend this appointment and have not contacted the hospital in advance.

Failure to attend generates a wasted appointment at a cost of €129 to the hospital and a longer wait time for another patient

**INSERT LOCAL HOSPITAL / SPECIALITY INFORMATION AS
REQUIRED HERE**

Yours sincerely,
Central Referrals
Phone: <Insert>
Email: <Insert>



<Patient Name>
<Address Line 1>
<Address Line 2>
<Address Line 3>

MRN: <number>
Date of Birth: <DD/MM/YYYY>
Date: <DD/MM/YYYY>

Outpatient Reminder Appointment Letter

Dear <Insert Patient Name>,

An appointment has been arranged for you to attend <Insert Clinician Name>, <Insert Speciality> outpatient clinic in <Insert Hospital Name> on:

Appointment Date: DD/MM/YYYY

Time: HH:MM

If you are unable to attend or if you wish to cancel this appointment, please contact the Hospital immediately so that your appointment can be offered to another patient:

Email <Insert> or by phone on <Insert>

In line with the National Outpatient Waiting List Protocol 2022,

you may be removed from the Outpatient Waiting List for this speciality if you do not attend this appointment and have not contacted the hospital in advance.

Failure to attend generates a wasted appointment at a cost of €129 to the hospital and a longer wait time for another patient

INSERT LOCAL HOSPITAL / SPECIALITY INFORMATION AS REQUIRED HERE

Yours sincerely,
Central Referrals
Phone: <Insert>
Email: <Insert>



<HOSPITAL NAME>

Outpatient DNA (Did Not Attend) Form

<Affix patient label here>

In line with the 2022 National Outpatient Waiting List Management Protocol patients are identified as **routine and whom DNA** should be removed from the waiting list and a letter sent to the patients and the source of referral
Patients identified as **urgent and/or high clinical and/or social needs whom DNA** need to be brought to the attention of the Clinician to determine the next step prior to issuing the patient a new date

TO BE COMPLETED BY OPD STAFF

Patients current OPD waiting list clinical priority (Please check relevant box) ROUTINE
 SEMI-URGENT
 URGENT

Patients previous Cancellation (CNA) / Did Not Attend (DNA) history if relevant:

TO BE COMPLETED BY CLINICIAN

Is the above patient to be removed from OPD waiting list? YES NO

If routine appointment, please indicate the reason for redating and the proposed timeframe below (note the above protocol in red):

If urgent / semi-urgent appointment, please indicate the proposed timeframe below:

Signed by Clinician: _____ Date: _____