

# Late Patient Policy

Patients are expected to arrive in good time for their appointments, considering journey times when booking appointments. We do understand that an occasional delay is unavoidable therefore, if a patient arrives within a reasonable time, then the clinician will see them. If patients arrive more than 10 minutes late, they have missed their appointment and will need to rebook. This is to prevent delays to the clinics and to ensure fairness for patients who have arrived on time.

We appreciate the effort our patients make to attend on time and therefore do our best to run as close to booked appointment times as possible. Adhering to a Late Patient Policy assists us in doing so. However, due to the nature of a medical practice, sometimes the doctor or nurse may be running behind. This is generally because the clinician has needed to spend longer with a patient, for example if a patient presents with complex issues or there is a medical emergency. We continually monitor this and where a patient regularly presents with complex issues, allowances are made, and extra time given to the consultation at the time of booking. We do ask that patients bear this in mind when waiting, as there may be an occasion in the future where they themselves need extra time.

## **When a patient is less than 10 minutes late:**

The receptionist will book the patient in but advise them they are late for their appointment and remind them that they must attend on time in the future. If applicable, the receptionist may advise them that the clinician is now seeing the next patient and that they may have an extended waiting time, as the doctor will see patients who arrived on time first.

## **When a patient is 10 or more minutes late:**

Patients who arrive 10 or more minutes late have therefore missed their appointment. The receptionist will advise them to rebook a new routine appointment.

If the patient indicates that there is a medically urgent reason, they need to be seen that day, the receptionist can ask the reason and may leave a message for the duty doctor or discuss with the clinician depending on the circumstances.

## **Further information:**

If a patient calls ahead to say they will be late, this does not **necessarily** alter the policy.

If they are going to be more than ten minutes late, the receptionist may ask the clinician (if they do not have a patient) and advise them on the phone if they should rebook, rather than waste a journey or if they can still be seen at the end of the surgery.

The clinician may make exception to children under 5 years or elderly patients.

Receptionists are not permitted to interrupt a clinician during surgery to request them to see late patients, so to avoid disappointment, please do not ask them to do so.

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