

Late Patient Policy

Patients are expected to arrive in good time for their appointments, taking into account 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 clinical sessions 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 GP surgery, 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 to spend extra time with the doctor.

In line with our Appointment guidelines, which are outlined on the Practice website, patients are asked to advise the receptionist when booking the appointment if they feel they will need additional 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. The clinician may now be seeing the next patient and they may have an extended waiting time, as the clinician will see patients who arrived on time first. The clinician may advise you to book a second appointment, as the reduced time may not allow for the completion of the full consultation or test required.

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.

Further information:

If a patient calls ahead to say they will be late, this does not alter the policy. If they are going to be more than ten minutes late, the receptionist will advise them on the phone that they should rebook, rather than waste a journey.

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