**Ladywell Medical Centre East**

**Policy for Late Attendance at a GP or Nursing Appointment**

Patients are expected to arrive in good time for their appointments.

This is to prevent delays to the GP and Nurse 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 Policy for Late Attendance assists us in doing so.

Due to the nature of a GP surgery, however, sometimes the Doctor or Nurse may be running behind. When the clinician is running late our reception staff will advise the patient upon arrival and apologise to them for the delay.

Should you be kept waiting for 20 minutes or more please ask reception to check your appointment to ensure you have checked in correctly or that there are no problems with the session.

The clinician makes the final decision on whether a patient can be seen or should re-book their appointment. Reception staff do not make this decision.

 Appointment with Doctor - When a patient is less than 10 minutes late:

The receptionist will book the patient in, unless the Doctor has already advised that the patient cannot be seen, but will advise them they are late for their appointment.

If applicable, the receptionist may advise them that the doctor 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.

The patient will be reminded that they must attend on time in the future.

Appointment with Dotcor - When a patient is 10 or more minutes late:

Patients who arrive 10 or more minutes late have 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 see a doctor that day, the receptionist can ask the reason and speak with the Duty Doctor who may feel it is clinically relevant to see the patient. If the Duty Doctor confirms that the patient should be seen they will be asked to take a seat and wait to be seen or given an alternative appointment time that day.

Appointment with Practice Nurse/Treatment Room Nurse/Nursing Assistant:

50% policy in place, i.e. if a patient is 50% late for the length of their appointment, e.g. 20 minute appointment, 10 minutes late; 40 minute appointment, 20 minutes late then the clinician they were due to see would not be able to see them.

If a patient attends and is less than 50% late the clinician they are seeing should be called to see if they can still see them, if they have not already advised that the patient is too late.

If the patient indicates that there is a medically urgent reason they need to see the Nurse that day, the receptionist can ask the reason and speak with the relevant clinician who may feel it is clinically relevant to see the patient. If the relevant clinician confirms that the patient should be seen they will be asked to take a seat and wait to be seen or given an alternative appointment that day.

If the patient cannot be seen the receptionist will advise the patient to re-book a new appointment.

Appointment with Phlebotomist:

If a patient arrives late for their appointment reception staff will contact the Phlebotomist to see if the patient can still be seen.

If the clinician is unable to see the patient, they will be advised to re-book.

Further Information:

If the Doctor has an urgent clinical need to see a particular patient, they will advise reception in advance that the patient may be "arrived" even if they arrive more than 10 minutes late. The patient will need to wait for a gap or the end of the surgery to be seen.

If a patient calls ahead to say they will be late, this does not alter the policy. If they are going to be late, the receptionist will advise them on the phone that they may not be seen and may need to re-book.

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

We extend every patient the courtesy of allowing them the amount of time they need to deal with their particular matters and we would not expect a patient or a receptionist to be interrupted in order to check in another patient unless there was a medical emergency. For this reason, we can only take into account the time a patient actually checks in as the time that they arrive.

Please do not assume that if you are only a few minutes late that you will be seen as your appointment may be the last one of the day for that clinician and they may not be able to see you.

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