

Reduction in DNA's

Theme | Outpatients

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REASON WHY?

When patients do not attend (DNA), it costs the Trust significantly and can lead to delays for others, impacting the quality of care. We are trialling the DrDoctor text messaging service in our outpatient departments to help reduce missed appointments. DrDoctor will send timely text reminders to patients, making it easier for them to attend or cancel in advance, helping us improve efficiency and patient experience.

PLAN

The plan was to implement DrDoctor across all Patient Access Centre (PAC) specialities.

The aim of this was to reduce the number of patients that did not attend appointments (DNA). This will help reduce the time that patients spend waiting for appointments, enable better utilisation and improve outcomes.

DO

The DrDoctor notifications were initially rolled out in April 2025, with different specialties being added on a weekly basis. By September 2025, all PAC booked specialties were live.

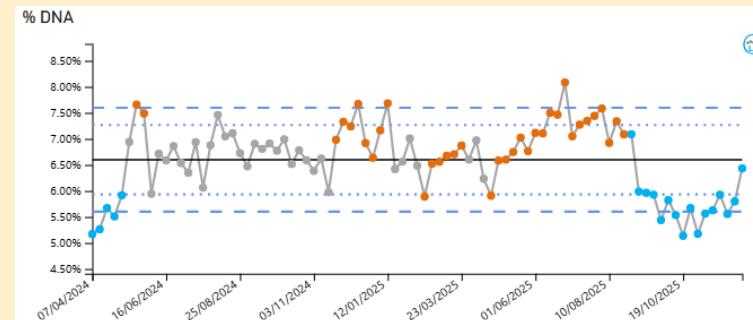
Efforts are ongoing to extend the use of DrDoctor across all outpatient clinics. This phased rollout aims to standardise appointment management processes and further integrate digital solutions within the service. Over 502,000 reminders have been sent since April 2025.



Reduce outpatient DNA's to 5% by December 2025.

STUDY

The introduction of patient reminders, featuring cancellation functionality, has effectively contributed to a reduction in Did Not Attend (DNA) rates. Nevertheless, this change has also led to a marked increase in short-notice cancellations, which is having a direct effect on overall clinic utilisation. The DNA percentage is now between 5%6%. Showing a statistically significant improvement (A reduction in around 2%)



In line with current Standard Operating Procedures, any appointment scheduled within 14 days requires direct confirmation from the patient. The implementation of Broadcast messaging has helped to decrease the time needed to backfill any resulting capacity. Despite these improvements, the frequency and timing of cancellations continue to pose operational challenges for clinic management.

ACT

The DNA's will continue to be monitored and themes identified for further improvement.

DNA's will be monitored as part of the outpatient governance with the aim to reduce lower than the 5% target.