Reducing DNAs to Outpatient Therapy clinics

Theme | The Best Place To Receive Healthcare.

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REASON WHY?

In order for patients to receive the best care they need to attend appointments to receive treatment. Patients do not attend (DNA) for numerous reasons, this leads to wasted clinic slots, rebooking and increases the waiting time for patients yet to be seen. Reduction in DNA therefore means more people are seen in a timely manner

SMART AIM

S SPECIFIC M MEASUREABLE A ACHIEVABLE R RELEVANT T TIME-BOUND

To reduce the number of patients who Do Not Attend outpatient therapy clinics at SaTH from 12% to less than 10% (the trust recommended threshold) by 30th September 2026

PLAN

The DNA rate for therapy outpatient clinics was on average around 12%. This was higher than the Trust recommended threshold of 10%.

A high DNA rate leads to people needing to be rebooked, which takes time of admin staff as well as other clinic slots. This can lead to people waiting longer for first appointments.

After discussion with team, they were keen to use the system DoctorDr that would send out Text reminders to patients who were due to have appointments.

DO

The team completed a telephone survey and discovered the main reason for people not attending was that they forget.

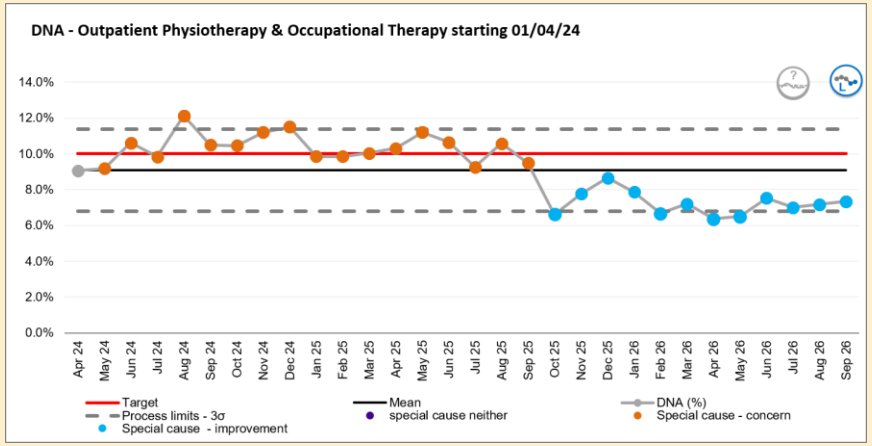
The management team for the therapy outpatients service engaged with the digital team to set up DoctorDr for the required clinics.

The system then went live on 30/7/25 for all Occupational Therapy clinics and September 2025 for all Physiotherapy clinics.

It has been in use since then.

STUDY

The introduction of DoctorDr resulted in a sustained improvement in the DNA rate from an average of above 10% to an average of around 7%.



The team have been pleased but now want to reset their target to 5%. In order to do this, they plan to use the clinic time where someone has not attended to review the notes and/or call the patient and make a decision regarding rebooking the session or discharging the person, if the session is no longer needed. This would allow for a reduction in rebooking, and a personal phone call may improve pre-engagement with the service.

ACT

The system DoctorDr has been **ADOPTED** by the team.

The Target will be **ADAPTED** as the team feel that they can further reduce the rate.

The new process of contacting patients will start in October 2026 and then be reviewed at the beginning of April 2027, as it will have had six months at that point to embed and see any impact made.

The new aim will therefore be: To reduce the number of patients who Do Not Attend outpatient therapy clinics from 10% to 5% by 31st March 2027

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & REFERENCES | With thanks to the therapy teams and admin teams who support our patients to receive the best healthcare.