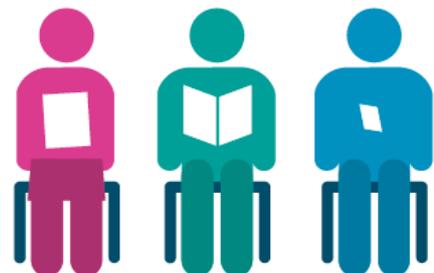




**Report on
'Did Not Attend' Appointments at
GP Surgeries in Goldthorpe
Thurnscoe and
Bolton upon Dearne**

WAITING ROOM



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Report Reviewed by: Healthwatch Champions, Healthwatch Strategic Advisory Board.

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Introduction

About Healthwatch Barnsley

Healthwatch Barnsley is commissioned by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and hosted and managed by Voluntary Action Barnsley (VAB). Healthwatch Barnsley (HWB) is a community led, community driven organisation with a Strategic Advisory Board, responsible for determining the direction of the organisation. We are also assisted by volunteers (Healthwatch Champions) whose role is to gather information and prioritise areas of work, ensuring engagement with all sections of the local population. This enables us to be representatives of as many health and social care service users as possible. We are part of a national network of Healthwatch organisations that involve people of all ages and from all sections of the community in local health and social care services.

We gather views from the community, report these views to the people responsible for providing and commissioning local services, engage people in decisions about services and monitor the service provision. As part of our work to gather views, we also can exercise our right to visit services through a process known as Enter and View. We also have a role in providing people with information about health and social care services available in the area.

In some areas, Healthwatch organisations provide advocacy for people making a complaint about NHS services. In Barnsley, this service is provided by DIAL and their details are at the end of this report. DIAL is not limited to dealing just with health service complaints and can also look at problems with social care services. Through our partnership with DIAL, we have been able to successfully close a number of complaints from our clients regarding their experiences of local services.

The national picture in relation to patients not attending appointments at their general practice

Patients' not attending appointments at their general practice is a major issue and cost to the National Health Service (NHS). DNA rates have an enormous impact on the health care system in terms of cost and waiting times, significantly adding to delays along the patient pathway.

The financial cost of missed appointments in the NHS has been estimated, in 2015, at £300m per year, based on 14m appointments being missed per year¹. By reducing the number of patients not attending appointments at general practices, even by a small amount, would result in a large financial saving. Reducing the rate of patients who did not attend their appointment (DNA) would also ensure that time was available for other

¹ <http://www.gponline.com/infographic-dnas-affect-general-practice/article/1352205>

patients who needed medical advice. This could then directly impact on the number of patients that present at A&E as they cannot get a GP appointment and are worried about their health, or get admitted to hospital due to their condition becoming serious.

The impact of patient ‘Did Not Attend’ (DNA) appointments at GP surgeries in the Dearne

In November 2015 an issue was brought to our attention by Councillor Gollick, on behalf of people living in the Dearne. The issue was that people were struggling to access their general practice. We reported on this issue in 2016. This report is a continuation of our outreach and engagement work in the Dearne area.

Gathering views and feedback

In order to gather more information and to speak to people living in the Dearne area, we arranged two engagement events at Goldthorpe and Thurnscoe Library. These events were publicised in the local press and via social media. As a result of this work, we spoke to a total of 42 people and found that the issue of people being able to get an appointment at their practice was a common theme.

In order to find out what service providers thought about these access issues, we visited two surgeries in the Dearne and spoke to staff and the practice managers. At both surgeries staff raised the issue that the biggest problem affecting access to appointments was patients not attending appointments they had booked.

In addition to our outreach and engagement work, we were called as a witness at the Overview and Scrutiny Commission led by Barnsley Council, as they had called a meeting to look at the local GP Federation and GP Access. At this meeting we were able to report on our findings to date and our plans for the next few months.

Working with the ‘Dearne Approach’

The ‘Dearne Approach’ is a partnership of different organisations, including Barnsley Council, working to improve the area for the people living there. Access to GPs was one of the issues that residents had identified to the ‘Dearne Approach’ and we went to meetings to provide an update on our findings and to ask for support. We wanted help to raise awareness of the importance of people cancelling their appointments when they are unable to attend, to ensure that other people could benefit from seeing a medical professional. We informed the meeting that one practice reported that 350 patients did not attend their appointments in one quarter at an estimated cost of £10,850 (based on The King’s Fund’s presentation that suggested a ten minute appointment with a GP costs £31²).

Healthwatch Barnsley agreed to explore the issues relating to DNA’s with service users and General Practices across the Dearne. We also agreed to raise awareness about the importance of keeping appointments or cancelling appointments where necessary.

² <https://www.slideshare.net/kingsfund/making-the-case-for-public-health-interventions>

Gathering Information

To gather more information we spoke to 350 patients living in Thurnscoe, Goldthorpe and Bolton upon Dearne. We also spoke to four general practices about DNA's and the impact they have on their surgery.

We used a survey (see appendix 1) when speaking to patients to ensure that we used a consistent approach and asked everyone the same question. During this work we wanted to focus on the following three areas:

1. How far in advance did patients have to wait for an appointment?
2. In the last six months have they booked an appointment at their GP practice but not attended.
3. If patients have tried to cancel an appointment but couldn't and what prevented them.

We spoke to people at events, local clubs and services; some of which are listed below:

- Salvation Army Goldthorpe
- Goldthorpe Library
- Willow Croft Flats, Bolton upon Dearne
- Snap Tin Café, Goldthorpe
- Willowcroft Flats, Bolton upon Dearne
- Rainbow Centre, Thurnscoe
- Thurnscoe Library
- St Helens Church, Thurnscoe
- Thurnscoe TARA
- Unity Club Goldthorpe
- Goldthorpe Centre

We also spoke to people at four general practices covering Goldthorpe, Thurnscoe and Bolton upon Dearne. These included:

- Dearne Valley Group Practice
- Goldthorpe Medical Centre
- Lakeside Surgery
- Hollygreen Surgery

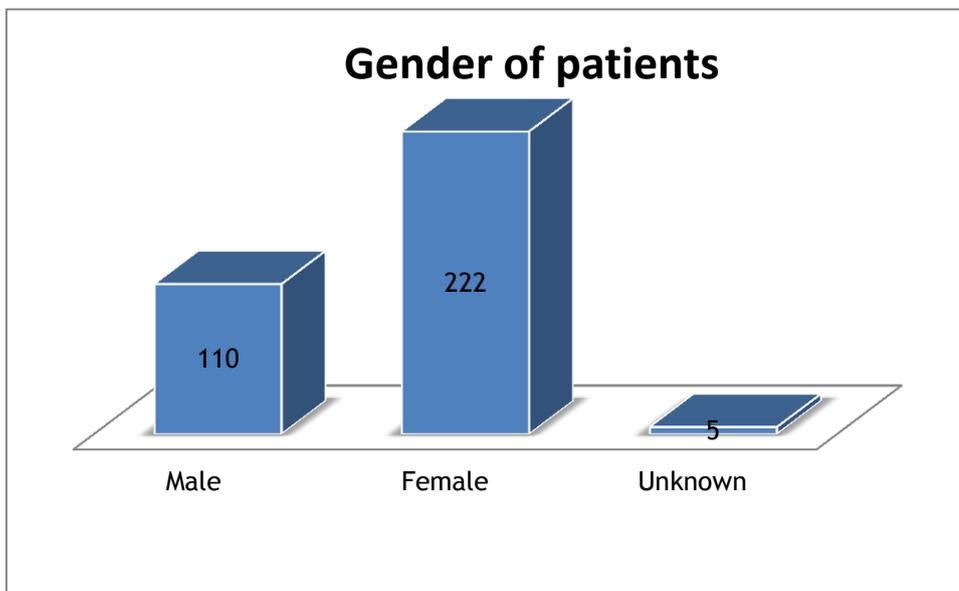
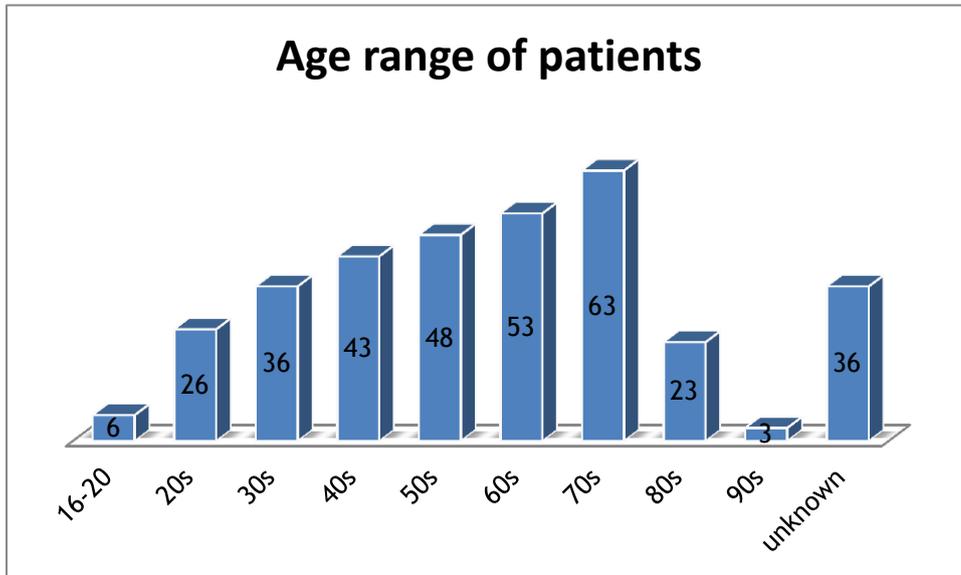
In addition we gave each GP surgery a short questionnaire (see appendix 2). The questionnaire focused on gaining statistics on DNA's from the surgeries. The information provided by the surgeries included the period November 2016 to May 2017.

Validation of information received

During the analysis process there were a number of responses which had to be withdrawn from the final data analysis due to the following reasons:

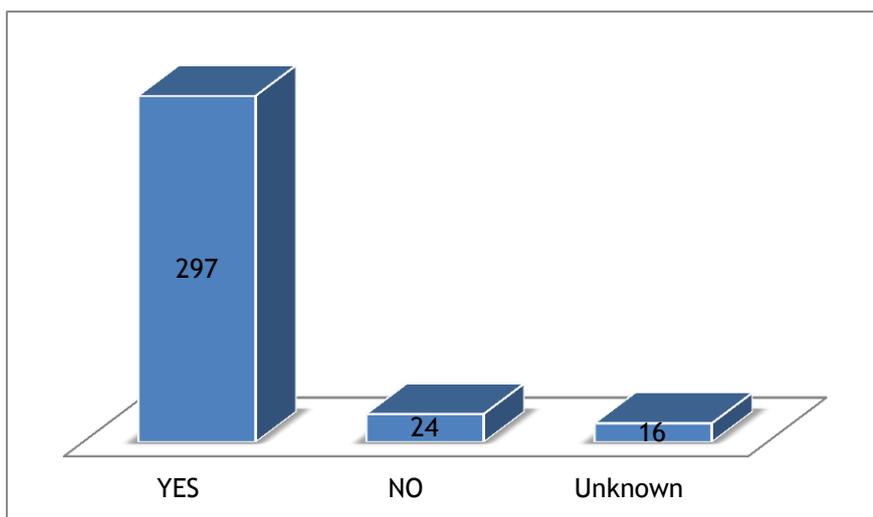
- 2 participants did not identify their GP practice in the survey.
- 3 participants were not registered at a GP surgery in the areas we were focusing on.

The feedback received has been broken down into the location of the GP practice the patients accessed, rather than where the patients lived. Graphs to show the age range of the patients we spoke to and their gender can be seen below:

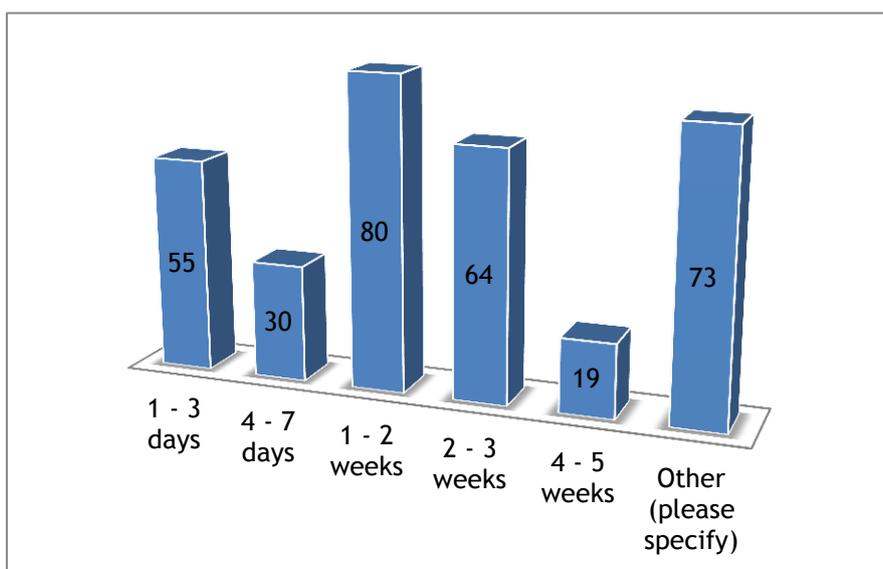


Results from the patient survey

In the last 6 months have you tried to book an appointment with your GP practice?



How far in advance did you have to wait for an appointment?



Our results show that just under 50% of patients can get an appointment within 2 weeks and just over 50% have to wait between 2 and 7 weeks. A GP online survey has shown that

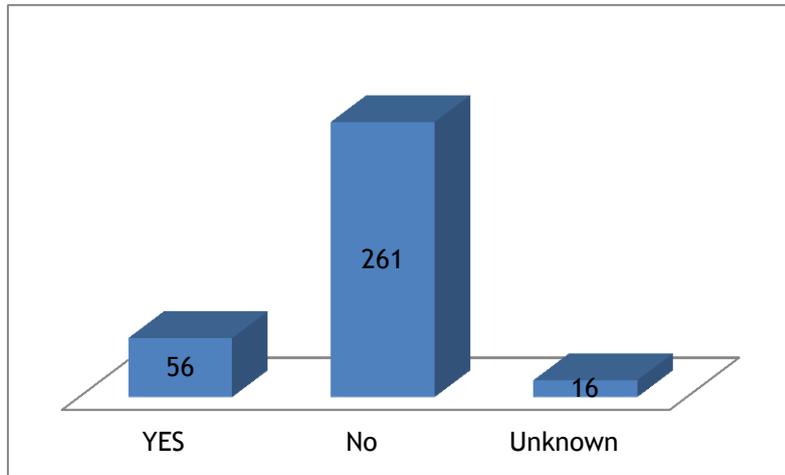
limiting the time that people have to wait for an appointment has help reduce the number of DNA's.

Other Comments (for a full list see appendix 3)

A total of 178 patients left feedback on booking appointments, below are a few examples of the comments we received. Many patients were raising similar concerns about the difficulty they faced when booking an appointment.

- “I had to wait 4-5 weeks for an appointment, rang every day to get this. I have to ring out of hours. I have learning difficulties and depression that makes me more anxious.”
- “Difficulty getting in to see a doctor, generally good once you're in. My dad had an accident and was in and out of hospital, now he has a district nurse who is brilliant.”
- “My wife has an ongoing medical condition and the doctor said at her last visit that if she becomes ill she must be seen by him straight away. A few weeks later she had to return home from work early as she was ill. We came straight here to the doctors as we were told, where the receptionist would not book us in for the same day, she would not even check with the doctor on what we was saying to see if this was true what he had said, that night my wife was rushed in to hospital where she had to stay in for 5 days, if she becomes ill again I will take her straight up the hospital without trying here at the GP first as there is no point. This booking system is failing the patients.”
- “If you need a quick appointment you need to come in at 8 am.”
- “Can only get an appointment on the day if you ring at 8 am. I've never been able to get through on the phone to get an appointment.”
- “Booked an emergency same day appointment.”
- “Have to phone the same day, when you get through all the appointments are gone.”
- “It's impossible to get an appointment when you need one.”
- “Same day, I went to the doctors at 8 as when you call for an appointment they have all gone.”
- “Not too bad I got through and got an appointment for when I needed.”
- “8 weeks, very hard to get an appointment, you have always recovered or got worse by the time you get to see your doctor.”
- “The booking line is a joke, you can never get through. They do not support working people. The receptionist told me to come in at 8 in the morning. I explained I work, she then abruptly told me to go online at midnight to book one. I work at 5 am and to get up at midnight is just not appropriate for me, a better appointment booking system needs to be in place.”

In the last 6 months have you booked an appointment at your GP practice but did not attend the appointment?



If YES please state why you did not attend

| | |
|---|----|
| Transport problems | 9 |
| Caring responsibilities | 4 |
| Not able to take time off work | 2 |
| Illness or condition improved | 7 |
| Illness or condition meant you were not well enough to attend | 9 |
| Forgot | 16 |
| Other | 16 |

As it can be seen from above the most common reason a patient did not attend the appointment is because they had forgotten about it. 16 patients gave the reason their condition improved or they were too unwell to attend.

Other reasons

- No longer needed.
- Needed one sooner.
- I was in hospital needed treatment before I could get an appointment.
- Wanted to change appointment.
- Other things to do.
- GP and nurse appointments booked consecutively; one over-ran and I subsequently missed the other as a result.

If you tried to cancel the appointment but couldn't, why was the reason?

- Bad service, no answer most of the time.
- Was hard to get through, I gave up.
- My mum could not get through.
- I could not get through.
- The line was always busy, by the time I got through my appointment time was over.

90% of the patients, who left comments, gave the same reason that the cancellation line was difficult to get through, and there was no answer which would enable them to cancel their appointments. (A full list of comments can be found in appendix 4).

Feedback received from general practices

The following statistics are based on the information provide by:

- Dearne Valley Group Practice
- Goldthorpe Medical Centre
- Hollygreen Practice, Goldthorpe
- Lakeside Surgery

Each surgery provided information on how many appointments were booked in each given month.

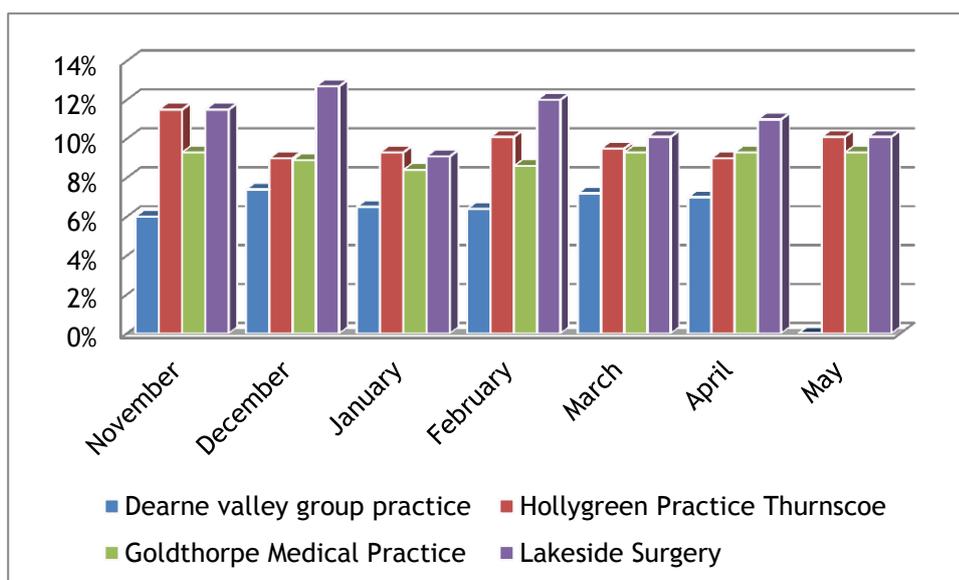
| | Dearne Valley Group Practice | Hollygreen Practice Thurnscoe | Goldthorpe Medical Practice | Lakeside Surgery |
|----------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| November | 3534 | 3413 | 2071 | 1033 |
| December | 3224 | 2986 | 1415 | 924 |
| January | 4238 | 3370 | 1878 | 879 |
| February | 3719 | 3060 | 1858 | 911 |
| March | 4172 | 3417 | 2158 | 1122 |
| April | 3330 | 3091 | 1516 | 918 |
| May | 2031 to 10/05 | 3214 | 1217 | 1074 |

The table below shows how many appointments were missed by patients who did not attend (DNA)

| | Dearne Valley Group Practice | Hollygreen Practice Thurnscoe | Goldthorpe Medical Practice | Lakeside Surgery |
|----------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| November | 211 | 392 | 192 | 119 |
| December | 239 | 302 | 126 | 117 |
| January | 257 | 313 | 158 | 80 |
| February | 239 | 310 | 159 | 109 |
| March | 302 | 323 | 201 | 114 |
| April | 232 | 276 | 141 | 101 |
| May | 64 to 10/05 | 325 | 113 | 108 |

The table and graph below shows the percentage of patients who did not attend their appointment each month, showing comparisons between the four surgeries.

| | Dearne valley group practice | Hollygreen Practice Thurnscoe | Goldthorpe Medical Practice | Lakeside Surgery |
|----------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| November | 6% | 11.5% | 9.3% | 11.5% |
| December | 7.4% | 9% | 8.9% | 12.7% |
| January | 6.5% | 9.3% | 8.4% | 9.1% |
| February | 6.4% | 10.1% | 8.6% | 12% |
| April | 7% | 9% | 9.3% | 11% |
| May | 3.2% (to 10/5) | 10.1% | 9.3% | 10.1% |



We asked each surgery to provide feedback about how DNA's affect the surgery:

- Dearne Valley Group Practice:

“Whilst the GP can always find something to do in the time slot that is not attended, patients become frustrated because the missed appointment could have been used by them. When we put the amount of DNA's on our Facebook page it always generates several comments. Several have commented that patients who DNA appointments should be fined like the patients of Dental Practices.

Unfortunately people who DNA do not value the General Practitioner Appointments and think that the service costs nothing so nothing is lost.

I have had patients DNA appointments that they have booked the same day - and in the past a patient told me that they did not attend because they had a hair dressers appointment. Patients do not value a GP appointment right until they cannot get an appointment themselves when the clinic is fully booked, a clinic that will ultimately have its own group of DNA's from patients”

- Hollygreen Practice Thurnscoe:

“We have a high demand for appointments across the whole range of healthcare professionals therefore when someone DNA's this is a waste of clinic time, if the patient had cancelled the appointment someone else could have booked it”

- Goldthorpe Medical Practice:

“It is a waste of valuable time with our clinicians and also stops someone else being seen”

- Lakeside Surgery:

“Waste of appointments, can extend GP surgery to see extra patients”

We asked each practice which appointment systems they have available

| | Dearne Valley Group Practice | Hollygreen Practice Thurnscoe | Goldthorpe Medical Practice | Lakeside Surgery |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Telephone appointments | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Drop in appointments | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Online appointments | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Automated appointments | √ | X | X | √ |
| Pre booked appointments | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Triage appointments | √ | X | √ | √ |

Do you have any of the following in place?

| | Dearne Valley Group Practice | Hollygreen Practice Thurnscoe | Goldthorpe Medical Practice | Lakeside Surgery |
|---|------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Text message appointments reminder | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Email appointment reminder | √ | x | x | x |
| pharmacy | √ | √ | √ | √ |
| Appointment cancellation line | x | x | √ | √ |
| Do you have any plans to change the booking system? | No | We are always reviewing our appointment system | No | No |

Do you have any information as to the reasons your surgery is experiencing this number of DNAs?

- Dearne Valley Group Practice:
“People forget to cancel; because an appointment has no visible cost to them they think it doesn’t matter if they do not attend”
- Hollygreen Practice:
“No, we do not know why we have a large number of DNA’s as we have notices up in the surgery and in our patient newsletters asking people to cancel their appointments if they no longer need them”
- Goldthorpe Medical Practice:
“No, sometimes even patients DNA same day appointments”
- Lakeside Surgery:
“No, we have notices in reception asking patients to cancel if they cannot make their appointment”

Do you have ideas on how DNA's can be reduced?

- Dearne Valley Group Practice:
*“We are going to discuss the possibility of a cancellation line for patient use and the possible benefits this could bring to the surgery.
We attempt to call patients in a morning that have long duration appointments*

e.g.: above twenty minutes long but tend to find this means patients want to cancel Nurse and HCA appointments and rebook for a later date as they have too much to do on that day and then have to try and fill the slots with other patients at last minute”

- Hollygreen Practice:

“I think that that the only way we would ever reduce our DNA rates is if we could charge patients”

- Goldthorpe Medical Practice:

No comment provided for this question.

- Lakeside Surgery:

“GP/Nurse to talk about this to the patient at their next appointment”

Conclusion

From this research we can clearly identify a real problem in the Dearne with patients not attending booked appointments at their GP Surgery. Why patients are failing to attend is very important. Are we experiencing a growing culture that ‘it’s free so it doesn’t matter’? Do people’s lifestyles mean they are just too busy to commit? In some cases there are clear barriers that lead to non-attendance such as transportation or caring responsibilities. Whatever the reason, the concern is not just the cost to our health service or the fact that patients are experiencing problems getting an appointment with their GP. The most important factor must be that patient safety is at risk if they cannot get an appointment when things are going wrong with their health.

We recognise that DNA only forms one part of patient access issues. The number of GPs retiring and current lack of replacement trained medical staff available is a national issue. Better lifestyles and access to services has resulted in more people living longer, many with long term health conditions leading to increase demand on services. Technology has also opened up opportunities to book online appointments which is open to abuse (some examples were highlighted to us that patients were booking multiple appointments and would select only the most convenient to them).

The following recommendations are based on findings in the Dearne area:

Recommendations

- We would recommend that action should be taken to provide better education to patients about the impact of missing appointments. Offending patients need to understand that they should be held accountable when they DNA.
- Patient use of electronic appointment systems may need to be considered, both from a perspective of access, but also where online appointment systems are being abused.
- Patients with a genuine reason for DNA e.g. carers or people with Mental Health conditions should be supported if they are experiencing difficulties attending their GP appointment. Reassurances by GP practices that support mechanisms are available and in place for patients with personal barriers must be given.
- Further work is required to consider the barriers patients face when wishing to cancel their GP appointment. What is working well for some practices with limited DNAs could be mirrored by others.
- Use of cancellation lines should be considered where people can leave their details and cancel their appointment without having to try to get through to the main switchboard.
- Consider not booking appointments too far in advance as some patients have indicated that this is why they sometimes forget.
- Consider introducing workers appointments where they do not exist already.
- Consider use of text reminders that ask for a yes/no response.
- Consider “sit and wait clinics”. Some patients said that they would rather sit and wait for hours than not be seen at all.
- Consider queuing calls in order of contact and telling people where they are in the queue, where the technology is available.
- Consider the development of an “i Heart Hub” in the Dearne area: -
To provide a service for those patients who find it difficult to attend their GP’s surgery during normal opening hours, and
To provide an out of hours emergency service within the Dearne area

Healthwatch Barnsley will work with a range of local media sources to present the key findings of this report.

Healthwatch Barnsley recommend that commissioners consider extending the DNA work throughout the borough to further research the impact of DNA’s on the local economy and the health of local people and their ability to gain access to GP appointments. Part of this work should include local awareness raising about the costs and effects of people not attending GP appointments. Healthwatch Barnsley would welcome any commissioning opportunities to undertake further research.

Special Thanks

Healthwatch would like to thank the 350 Patients who took part in the survey and gave up their valuable time. We would also like to thank Hollygreen Practice, Lakeside, Dearne Valley Group Practice and Goldthorpe Medical Practice and the groups and services across the Dearne who welcomed us in to undertake this piece of work.

If you have read this report and have any further questions or experiences you would like to share they will be gratefully received and shared via our intelligence

networks. Your continued feedback will also help us to keep up to date with what is happening within the service. Your feedback will also inform us of progress within the service.

Contact us

If you would like to contact us about anything in this report, or about any health or social care issue in Barnsley, you can do so in the following ways:

Address: The Core, County Way, Barnsley, S70 2JW

Telephone: 01226 320106

Text/SMS: 07870 599445

Email: healthwatch@vabarnsley.org.uk

Website: www.healthwatchbarnsley.co.uk

Facebook: Healthwatch Barnsley

Twitter: @HWatchBarnsley

Appendix 1 Patient Survey

GP Appointments DNAs (Did Not Attends) Patient Survey

Healthwatch Barnsley is currently looking at the significant impact to patients on availability to book an appointment with your GP (or any services offered by your GP Practice such as with the Practice Nurse). We are also aware that for many GP surgeries the number of people not attending pre-booked appointments is impacting on this problem. To support this work we also need to hear the experiences from patients and would be grateful if you could complete the following short survey. Your answers will be kept anonymous.

1. Are you... Male Female
2. How old are you? _____
3. Name of your GP Practice _____
4. In the last 6 months have you tried to book an appointment at your GP Practice?
Yes No
5. How far in advance did you have to wait for an appointment?
Seen immediately
1 - 3 days
4 - 7 days
1- 2 weeks
2 - 3 weeks
4 - 5 weeks
other please state _____
6. In the last 6 months have you booked an appointment at your GP Practice but did not attend the appointment?
Yes No

If yes, please tick why you did not attend:
 - Transport problems
 - Caring responsibilities
 - Not able to take time off work
 - Illness or condition improved
 - Illness or condition meant you were not well enough to attend
 - Forgot
 - Other (please state) _____
7. If you tried to cancel the appointment but couldn't, why was this e.g. appointment line was busy? (please state)

Thank you for completing this information, the information you have provided has been very important in helping to influence improvements to GP services in the future.

So that we can see if the Healthwatch membership is representative of the different communities we have in Barnsley it would be helpful if you would fill in the following questions. Please tick the boxes below which you feel are appropriate.

| | | | |
|---|-------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Ethnicity | Tick | | Tick |
| British | | Other Asian | |
| Irish | | Caribbean | |
| Other White | | African | |
| White & Black Caribbean | | Other Black | |
| White and Black African | | Chinese | |
| White and Asian | | Any other | |
| Other mixed | | Gypsy Traveller | |
| Indian | | Polish | |
| Pakistani | | Greek | |
| Bangladeshi | | Turkish | |
| | | I do not want to answer this question | |
| Religion | Tick | | Tick |
| No Religion | | Jewish | |
| Buddhist | | Muslim | |
| Christian | | Sikh | |
| Hindu | | Any other religion or belief | |
| | | I do not wish to answer this question | |
| Disability | Tick | | Tick |
| Physical Impairment | | Learning Disability | |
| Mental Health Condition | | Other | |
| Long-standing illness or health condition such as Cancer, HIV, Diabetes | | I do not wish to answer this question | |
| Sensory impairment | | None | |
| Gender | Tick | | Tick |
| Male | | Female | |
| Transgender | | I do not wish to answer this question | |
| Sexuality | Tick | | Tick |
| Bisexual | | Gay Man | |
| Gay Woman (Lesbian) | | Heterosexual / Straight | |
| Other | | I do not wish to answer this question | |
| Age Range | Tick | | Tick |
| 0-5 | | 6-11 | |
| 12-19 | | 20-30 | |
| 31-40 | | 41-50 | |
| 51-60 | | 60+ | |

Data Protection

Your details will be stored on a confidential, secure register used only by Healthwatch Barnsley. This form will be stored anonymously and will only be shared as statistical data for monitoring purposes. Healthwatch Barnsley is registered under the Data Protection Act. Should you decide at any time that you no longer wish to be a member, simply contact us and we will remove you from the database

Appendix 2

GP Survey

Healthwatch Barnsley is conducting an independent survey about the impact of Do Not Attends (DNA) on individual GP surgeries across the Dearne in Barnsley. The information we receive will be collated into a report and used to highlight the impact on patient's access to GP and clinic appointments across Thurnscoe, Goldthorpe and Bolton upon Dearne. The survey will close on June 5th, 2017 and your input will be invaluable in helping to address what actions might need to be taken (globally) to reduce DNA and increase patient appointments.

- 1. Name of Surgery**

- 2. Please state the number of patients registered at your surgery**

- 3. Please state the number of appointments for each month**

November 2016

December 2016

January 2017

February 2017

March 2017

April 2017

May 2017

- 4. Please state the number of DNA's (Did Not Attend) for each month**

November 2016

December 2016

January 2017

February 2017

March 2017

April 2017

May 2017

5. How do DNA's affect your surgery? Please state.

6. Currently what appointment systems do you have available?

Telephone appointments

Same day appointment

Online appointments

Automated appointments

Pre booked appointments

Triage appointments

7. Do you have any of these in place?

Please answer yes, no or intend to.

Y N I

Text Message Appointment Reminders

Email Appointment Reminders

Pharmacy

Appointment Cancellation Line

Other (Please specify)

8. Do you have any plans to change your booking system?

9. Do you have any information as to the reasons your surgery is experiencing this number of DNAs?

10. Do you have ideas on how DNA's can be reduced?

Thank you for completing this questionnaire for more information contact Lorna Lewis (lorna.lewis@vabarnsley.org.uk)

Appendix 3

1. Have to phone the same day, when you get through all the appointments are gone.
2. It's impossible to get an appointment when you need one.
3. Booked an emergency same day appointment.
4. Same day appointment.
5. 4-5 weeks, possibly longer.
6. I am called in when I need to be seen.
7. If I am down here at 7.30 I get to see the doctor, if not it can be weeks.
8. Only have same day appointment, can't book in advance.
9. Called up early this morning for a same day appointment.
10. Usually weeks, but if you come in early or call early, you may get a same day appointment.
11. Husband has had major problems, he can never get an appointment.
12. A long time. I can never get an appointment, I go in and they say I need to call early for an appointment, why can't they book me an appointment when I am there?
13. No appointments available, long wait they should give you one sooner.
14. Same day, I went to the doctors at 8am because when you call for an appointment they have all gone.
15. They say call at 9am then you cannot get through. This goes on for days until you eventually give up.
16. Not too bad, I got through and got an appointment for when I needed.
17. Booked last night at 4pm.
18. 8 weeks. Very hard to get an appointment, you have always recovered or got worse by the time you get to see your doctor.
19. Very hard to get an appointment, had to get up early today just to be seen and to get an appointment, the automatic telephone line is terrible.

20. I came to the surgery to get my mum an appointment with suspected pneumonia, they refused to see her and told me to book her an appointment at midnight online, I got her in at i-Heart Barnsley and she did have pneumonia.
21. The booking line is a joke, you can never get through. They do not support working people, the receptionist told me to come in at 8 in the morning. I explained I work, she then abruptly told me to go online at midnight to book one. I work at 5am and to get up at midnight is just not appropriate for me. A better appointment booking system needs to be in place.
22. I once called 96 times to try and get through for an appointment and I still did not get one, the system is a joke, it just isn't working.
23. I booked this appointment online, it is not very good as this was the only one available. I work offshore and when I came back I tried 3 times over the phone that day and all the appointments were gone. They should be a system where you can book an appointment over the phone for sooner and not just on the day.
24. Pre-booked.
25. I have been here since 7.45am to get an appointment. I was given one for this morning, I am still sat here waiting. I know it is a same day appointment and I am grateful for this, but 30 mins late up to now. They should know what appointments they have so why give me a wrong time?
26. My wife has an ongoing medical condition and the doctor said at her last visit that if she becomes ill she must be seen by him. A few weeks later she had to return home from work early as she was ill. We came straight here where the receptionist would not book us in for the same day, she would not even check with the doctor to see if what we was saying was true. That night my wife was rushed into hospital where she had to stay in for 5 days. If she becomes ill again I will take her straight to the hospital without trying here first as there is no point, this booking system is failing the patients.
27. Could not book it, there was no appointments available, the system is a joke, they need a new system.
28. 5 weeks.
29. If you can get one at all!! The appointment scheme is a big joke!
30. Couldn't get one.
31. If you call up at 8am you might be lucky and get one that day if it is an emergency, if not you could be waiting up to 6 weeks!
32. Husband has had problems, he can never get an appointment, and I can as I am more assertive.

33. A long time, I can never get an appointment. They say I need to call for an appointment, why can't they book me an appointment when I am there?
34. If you need a quick appointment you need to come in at 8am.
35. Seen immediately.
36. Same day.
37. No sooner appointments.
38. No quicker appointments.
39. They send for me.
40. I cannot get an appointment quick unless i come in at 8am and queue up to get a same day appointment.
41. 1-3 days depending on what the problem is.
42. I've waited up to 2 weeks, but when I ring for my son we generally get an appointment for the same day.
43. Every time you phone up fully booked or phones don't work or lines are busy.
44. No chance / do not have a prayer.
45. No chance of appointment.
46. Still waiting after 2 weeks no appointment come through.
47. Varies.
48. Booked appointment got one straight away.
49. Can only get an appointment on the day if you ring at 8am, I've never been able to get through on the phone to get an appointment.
50. Got one straight away.
51. 6 weeks.
52. 5 weeks to see my GP and 1 week to see another.
53. Couldn't get in.
54. Can't recall.

55. Tried to but couldn't get through so I went down but there were no appointments.
56. 4-5 weeks, rang every day to get this, have to ring out of hours. I have learning difficulties and depression that makes me more anxious.
57. 1-3 days and 2-3 weeks you have to ring every day, you can get in if it's an emergency.
58. 1-2 weeks. Really hard to get through
59. Unable to get through to surgery
60. 1-3 days, phone early but you can't always get through to Thurnscoe.
61. 2-3 weeks, nightmare, can't get through.
62. 6 weeks Dr Sen - sent to GH practitioner or nurse in 4 weeks went to casualty Mexborough who wouldn't look at it
63. Same day rang up.
64. Hospital informed to doctors has open appointment at hospital.
65. Workers appointment too long
66. Working appointment waste of time
67. Only offered a nurse practitioner appointment.
68. 2.5 months.
69. Same day.
70. 2.5 months.
71. Have to ring every day, can get you in if it is an emergency.
72. Been brilliant, can't fault them, no complaints.
73. Difficulty getting in to see a doctor, generally good once you're in. Dad had an accident was in and out of hospital, now he has a district nurse who is fantastic.
74. No problem, would recommend them.
75. On occasion can get in, have to phone at 8am.

76. Six weeks wait for post-natal check-up, fortunately both were fine but might not have been.

77. Straight away.

Appendix 4

- Cannot always get through
- Cannot get through (telephone) to get appointments and to cancel
- Yes was ok
- Bad service, no answer most of the time
- Was hard to get through, I gave up
- my mum could not get through
- I could not get through
- The line was always busy, by the time I got through my appointment time was over
- My friend is at a GP and they have a cancellation line, so if you press 2 you can leave your cancellation on the answer machine
- Line is always busy, can never get through
- When I have tried in the past you cannot get through
- You're lucky if you can get through to them
- Yes was ok
- Bad service, no answer most of the time
- Long wait on phone
- Yes been ok
- On a morning it is really difficult
- I hear it is difficult
- I don't try using the phone line, i come in to change the appointment
- Yes - could not get through only way to get through is call at 5 past midnight
- The surgery ring in the morning to make sure you still want your appointment
- Couldn't get through. Too ill to attend
- Booked at Great Houghton couldn't get there didn't bother
- Rang, cancelled, further appointment made
- No text message
- Cancelled it
- Appointment was a workers appointment too far away and no reminder
- Tried to cancel but couldn't get through
- Said they would send a reminder but didn't get one
- Couldn't get through
- Couldn't get through to speak to anyone. I don't have internet access either
- Couldn't get through
- Did not receive text reminder
- Wouldn't be able to get through
- Was too far in advance. They have started texting now so that might help
- Arrived late missed appointment

- Forgot what day it was
- Couldn't get through on phone. don't have internet