



Appointments

NYCH's appointment system supports equity of access to services for all clients, with appointments generally being provided to clients in order of their presentation at the service. NYCH recognises, however, that there are instances where an individual's presenting issue or social circumstance make their needs more urgent than those of other clients. All services therefore have priority systems for appointments to ensure that the needs of these individuals are met in a timely manner.

NYCH expects and encourages clients to attend their appointments and, in line with the philosophy of Community Health, believes it is the clients' responsibility to ensure that this occurs. NYCH acknowledges however, that there are some circumstances in which clients who fail to attend should be followed up to ensure a vulnerable client's health status is not adversely affected.

Procedure

- When making appointments, Reception staff and direct health care staff should advise clients that, if possible, the client should give 48 hours notice of cancellation of an appointment, allowing the appointment to be filled by another client.
- Direct health care staff should make their clients aware that we consider it to be the client's responsibility to make and cancel appointments where necessary and that it is their responsibility to contact us if they require follow up after a broken appointment.
- In the following circumstances, direct health care staff are responsible for making a reasonable attempt, by telephone and/or letter, to follow up a client who has missed/cancelled an appointment:
 - If the health care worker is concerned about the client's well being, health or welfare as a result of the missed appointment;
 - If the health care worker believes that the client's ability to take responsibility is impaired;
 - If there is any doubt as to whether the appointment details were understood by the client (e.g. an appointment made for a client with limited English skills when an interpreter is unavailable).
- Where a client continually misses/cancels appointments without 48 hours advance notification, it is the appropriate health care worker's responsibility to advise the client that this is not acceptable. The client should also be advised of the conditions that apply for making future appointments, in accordance with the specific guidelines developed by each team.
- To inform future developments of the Broken Appointment policy, all NYCH staff should record 'failure to attend' in the client health record.