



Best Practice “No Show Appointments” at Jefferson University Physicians

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POLICY STATEMENT

All patients scheduled for an appointment with a Jefferson University Physician who are a “no show” at the scheduled appointment time are tracked to insure appropriate follow-up. Patients will be designated “no show” when they do not arrive on the day of their scheduled appointment. Information will be made available to the physician regarding all patient “no show” appointments to ascertain the appropriate follow-up.

SAMPLE “NO SHOW” LETTER

Date

Sample Patient
123 Any Avenue
Town, PA 12345

Dear Ms. Patient:
We have tried to call you, however we have not been able to reach you. Dr. Rosen needs for you to return to our office for a follow up visit.
In order to provide you with optimal health care services, your cooperation in keeping appointments is very important.
Please call our office at 215-955-6760 to schedule a follow up appointment with Dr. Marc Rosen as soon as possible.

Sincerely,
Danielle M. DeMaio-DeAngelis
Director of Practice Operations
Thomas Jefferson University -
Department of Otolaryngology - HNS
215-955-2392
danielle.demaio-deangelis@jefferson.edu
CERTIFIED MAIL
REGULAR MAIL

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RATIONALE AND BENEFITS

Effective systems and processes help reduce adverse events and claims by decreasing reliance on memory or informal mechanisms. System failures can lead to patients “falling through the cracks” and potentially to medical professional liability claims.

Consistency and standardization in practices helps ensure that each case is reviewed by the physician for appropriate follow-up and all interventions/results are documented in the patient’s medical record. Documenting follow-up attempts to contact patients improves defensibility against allegations such as failure to diagnose, monitor, supervise and follow-up.

Documentation in the medical record should include efforts to reach the patient (how, when and results) and the reason for the missed appointment.

Initiating a consistent fail-safe system for communication of “no show” appointments and implementing appropriate follow-up will enhance the quality of patient care and improve patient satisfaction. By including the patient as a member of the care team, the patient is empowered to actively participate in his/her care. Office personnel should verify the accuracy of the contact information and emphasize the importance of keeping appointments at the time of scheduling.

DOCUMENTATION

• Documentation in the medical record will include a copy of any correspondence sent to the patient and a brief synopsis of any telephone calls to the patient, including the inability to contact the patient, if applicable. All other records of “no show” activity will be documented via the IDX system.

PROCEDURE

For JUP practices utilizing the IDX scheduling module, all patients scheduled for an appointment will be entered into the IDX scheduling system as PEN (pending) by the designated front desk reception staff.

For JUP practices not utilizing the IDX scheduling module, an alternative documented process approved by the JUP Risk Management Committee for tracking and monitoring “no show appointments” must be in place.

As patients arrive for their scheduled appointment, the appropriate patient information will be entered or verified in the IDX system.

If a patient does not arrive on the day of his/her scheduled appointment, the clinical support staff/front desk receptionist will change the status of the appointment in the IDX system from PEN (Pending) to NOS (No Show).

A designated front desk staff member will run an IDX standard report daily to identify all patients who did not show for their appointment and forward to the appropriate physician.

The physician will determine what follow-up is necessary for the “no show” appointment. Choices could include:

- Telephone follow-up to re-schedule the appointment made by the clinical support staff or receptionist. In addition to scheduling the new appointment, the reason for the visit will be documented on the VDF screen in IDX scheduling indicating, “Re-scheduled from no show”.
- Personal telephone call regarding the specific medical condition made by the physician stressing the need to keep the appointment. The call should be made as soon as possible and a notation documented in the patient’s medical record.

A standard form letter sent by regular mail or certified letter with return receipt, depending on the situation. A copy of the letter or a documented note will be filed in the patient’s chart by the Medical Records personnel. The physician will initial and date the copy of the letter to indicate receipt and review of the correspondence.

If in any follow-up contacts with the patient, the patient indicates that he/she no longer desires to continue receiving care by the physician, this information must be documented in the patient’s medical record and communicated to the physician.

If the patient is a “no show” or misses three or more consecutive scheduled appointments and no response to communication is received, active patient status is reviewed by the physician to determine whether the patient will remain with the practice. If a decision is made to terminate the patient from the practice, the appropriate correspondence, following review and approval by JUP Risk Management or University Counsel, will be sent by certified mail to the patient, as outlined in the JUP Risk Management Guidelines for “Terminating a Physician-Patient Relationship”.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

• Adherence to this policy will be periodically monitored by JUP Risk Management in collaboration with the JUP Practice Administrator/Director of Practice Operations or designee.