

How can we make it easier to get an appointment?
A message from the patient participation group.

As patients we all share the same disappointment on those occasions when we cannot pre-book to see the GP of our choice. We accept the situation in the knowledge that our GP is very busy. That the GP is busy, is very true, however, what we may not be fully aware of is the non-attendance of a high proportion of those patients who have already pre-booked. We do see in the Newsletter the Did Not Attend (DNAs) figures that are quoted but this of course does not affect us because, as individuals, we cannot possibly be responsible...*can we* ? We do very generously appreciate the frustration of the GP concerned, and leave it at that. How frustrating for us though, who really needed to see that particular GP....food for thought indeed.

Statistics show a very high proportion of non- attendance (on average, a startling 35 per week !). Our GPs do of course, have the ultimate sanction of removing patients from the practice – for repeated non-attendance. Although extremely reluctant to do this, the practice is obliged to act in accordance with Health Authority guidelines that are carefully designed for best practice.

The onus therefore is on the us, the patient, to ensure appointments are kept.

Now, we are all human and as such can accidentally miss the odd appointment – this is not the issue. (Our GPs are also aware of those of us who are vulnerable and need extra input with regard to appointment booking and other issues). The rest of us can actively do our bit to help our Practice – indeed we are all responsible for our own actions, including booking and keeping appointments. If we wish pre-book to see the GP of our choice , it is our responsibility to keep that appointment. Problems can arise prior to the appointment and in that case, a phone call to the surgery enables cancellation that then enables another of us to book that slot. Simple....only takes a few minutes to do this.

The PPG is committed to helping our Practice to monitor this particular issue. Any ideas/suggestions from us all, as patients, will be well received. It is down to us...