



Subject: Appointment Policy

Policy Number:

Effective Date: January 1, 2015

Revision Dates:

PURPOSE

To clarify the expectation of a patient with regard to making and keeping dental appointments at the Pediatric Dental Clinic

GENERAL POLICY

Pediatric Dental Clinic is dedicated to providing the best quality dental education and services to improve the dental health of children ages birth through 18 and children with special needs ages birth through 20.

To help meet the increase in demand for our services and in an effort to provide the best care possible to the most patients it is essential that a patient agrees to make and keep appointments in accordance with explicit guidelines. Failure to comply with these guidelines could have a negative impact on the care process for the individual patient and greatly inhibits the Center's ability to treat patients in a timely and efficient manner.

IMPLEMENTATION

I. Keeping Appointments

A. Appointment Cancellation: An appointment cancellation is defined as notice being given to the clinic by the patient at least 24 hours before the appointment that he/she cannot meet that arranged appointment.

B. Broken Appointments: A broken appointment is defined as one of the following conditions:

1. Not showing up for an appointment
2. Arriving more than 10 minutes late for an appointment
3. Cancelling an appointment with less than 24 hours notice.

C. Documentation: The clinic is responsible for documentation of broken appointments in the patient record. The documentation shall include the date and time of a broken appointment, time of arrival for patients late to a planned appointment, time of cancellation if less than 24 hours notice given, as well as the initials of the front desk staff entering the broken appointment. Only broken appointments entered into the medical record shall be considered in the discontinuance of advanced scheduling.

D. Notification: Patients will be notified that a broken appointment has been entered if they are calling to cancel with less than 24 hours notice, on the day of service for late arriving patients, or when an appointment is rescheduled after a patient fails to show up.

II. Advanced Scheduling Discontinuance Protocol

A formal protocol shall be used for managing the warning to patients and possible discontinuance of advanced scheduling.

A. Notification Letter: A patient who has two broken appointments documented in the patient record shall be sent a notification letter (see Appendix B) reminding them of the appointment obligation they agreed to and the consequences of non-compliance. A copy of the letter shall be placed in the patient record and a notation that such a letter has been sent shall be made in the progress notes.

B. Advanced Scheduling Discontinuance: A patient who has three broken appointments in the patient records shall be denied the ability to schedule appointments more than two business days in advance. The patient may contact the clinic on a given day and if there is an availability for that day or the following two days it will be given to the patient. If there is no availability it will be the patient's responsibility to contact the clinic again at another date/time.

C. Advanced Scheduling Reinstatement: A patient with three broken appointments who must adhere to the two business day scheduling guideline can have up to two broken appointments removed from their account by showing up on time for their next two scheduled appointments. Once patients drop below three broken appointments they may resume scheduling future appointments in the normal manner.

III. Immediate Family Members Scheduling: Immediate family members can schedule appointments on the same day and at the same time as long as there are no broken appointments. After the first broken appointment, immediate family members will not be scheduled on the same day.



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Director of Pediatric Dentistry

Date 11/14/2014

Appendices: Appendix A, Notification Letter



APPENDIX A Notification Letter

Date:

Patient Name & Address

Chart #:

Dear (Parent/Caregiver Name),

Your record at the **Pediatric Dental Clinic** indicates that you have broken two of your scheduled dental appointments. Our acceptance agreement with patients states that when you reach three broken appointments it will result in your no longer being able to schedule appointments in advance.

When you have three broken appointments in your records you will only be allowed to schedule appointments two business days in advance. You may contact the clinic on a given day and if there is an availability for that day or the following two days it will be given to you. If there is no availability it will be your responsibility to contact the clinic again at another date/time.

In order for us to provide timely care to our patients and to support the growing demand for our service, it is essential that patients can comply with our appointment policy. If you are not able to meet your next scheduled appointment date/time, please be sure to give us a call to reschedule your appointment, to avoid a third broken appointment and discontinuance of your ability to schedule in advance.