



AB022. 183. Factors associated with attendance rates of scheduled elective general surgery: a qualitative study

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Background: Patient failure to attend hospital outpatient appointments results in suboptimal utilisation of clinical staff, reduces revenue opportunities and extends waiting times for elective procedures.

Methods: To reduce the rate of last minute procedural cancellations we performed a prospective, qualitative study evaluating the best mode of communicating with patients of their upcoming scheduled procedures and factors affecting patient attendance. One hundred patients, over the age of eighteen, attending outpatient pre-operative assessment

clinic over a two month period were asked to complete a short questionnaire (between August 2017–October 2017) at Ashford St Peters Hospital.

Results: We found 52 procedures cancelled with little notice over 1 year in a busy Upper GI service. A significant number of the respondents to our survey cited lack of clarity in communication as a reason to not attend. Fifty-two percent of the respondents indicated a text message service would make them less likely to miss/cancel a procedure.

Conclusions: We have concluded that implementing a text messenger service, allowing two way communication between patients and the booking office, would reduce last minute procedural cancellations in the elective setting. We plan to re-audit the failure to attend rates following implementation of the Envoy messenger service currently used in our outpatient department.

Keywords: Patient non-attendance; theatre resources; message service

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