



AB068. SOH23ABS_189. Practical and easy-to-implement steps to effectively reduce patients who do not attend (DNA) surgical outpatient appointments; a quality improvement project from Portiuncula University Hospital, Ballinasloe

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Background: As the Health Service Executive moves closer to 1 million patients on outpatient waiting lists, it is imperative that outpatient departments (OPDs) are as efficient as possible. Patients who do not attend (DNA) waste valuable spaces that could be used to help reduce waiting lists. It is a significant problem, with 478,765 patients not attending in 2016, making up 13% of all appointments in Ireland.

Methods: Portiuncula University Hospital (PUH) was included in a national DNA pilot scheme to reduce general surgery and urology OPD DNA rates. August 2022 DNA rates were used as a baseline for comparison. There were four strategies adopted to reduce DNA: (I) standardised scheduling timelines; (II) standardising appointment letter and validating accurate contact details; (III) issuing reminder letters 2 weeks prior to appointments; and (IV) offering patient's choice in appointment date if unable to attend. Data is presented from the results of the first 2 weeks of the pilot study.

Results: General surgery OPD DNA rate in August 2022 was 11.1%. After implementation of the above interventions

the DNA rate was reduced to 6.3% (n=10/160) in the first 2 weeks of the pilot study. Urology OPD DNA rate in August 2022 was 21.5%. Again, significant improvement in the DNA rate was seen. In the first 2 weeks of the pilot, the urology OPD DNA rate was reduced to 7.4% (n=4/54).

Conclusions: We present promising provisional results from the DNA pilot scheme, demonstrating significant reduction in general surgery and urology OPD DNA rates with easy-to-implement interventions.

Keywords: Outpatient department (OPD); do not attend (DNA); waiting list; quality improvement; general surgery

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Footnote

Conflicts of Interest: The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

Ethical Statement: The authors are accountable for all aspects of the work in ensuring that questions related to the accuracy or integrity of any part of the work are appropriately investigated and resolved.

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