

## Why do some doctors run late

### What we do to avoid delays

- We encourage double appointments for people with long lists or problems
- We identify patients that can be assessed by the nurses to speed the access eg sickness certificate only patient, sutures , dressings , immunisations
- Use our app to make appointment – this helps identify some appointment types and can guide you
- We have 15 minute appointments as standard unlike some clinics with 10 minute appointments – most single things can be handled in 10 – 12 minutes and 15 is rounded up to account for variations

We offer walk in appointments for urgent problems to help patients gain medical access when we are booked out. We expect this to a short consultation with one problem. Please make an appointment if you know you have longer, or more detailed requests

### How we manage patients

- Emergencies are seen first. These take time. Booked appointments can become emergencies and one day you will be grateful when the doctor spends this time with you.
- Booked appointments have priority over walk-ins
- Walk-ins that have been waiting a while, when only one doctor on call, may be seen before a booked appointment **IF** that walk-in patient has been here for a considerable time prior to a booked appointment and there is not a considerable wait for the booked appointment. Large numbers of walk-ins will lead to longer delays for them

A walk-in arriving at the same time as you or after you may **ONLY** be seen prior to you if you are waiting for different/specific doctor

### Not all doctors practice the same way

- some write lots of notes which takes time
- some explain things slower or in more detail which takes time
- some take longer to examine patients than others

this is why you develop a relationship with a doctor of a particular style

### Lists of things/extra patient

- some patients present with lists without a longer appointment. Some doctors oblige to help the patient. Occasionally the third or fourth item may be serious and can't be ignored. People present their lists in their order but it is not necessary the order that a doctor thinks is important. If you have a list provide it early in the consultation process.
- Sometimes the a family member has suddenly become unwell and the doctor is asked to see them briefly (which is ok if it turns out to be simple). We discourage these consultations.

### Not everything is simple to a doctor

- a sore throat can be simple or complicated, taking more time
- A blood pressure script may be seen as paperwork in some circumstances or require a cardiac examination for others.
- Normal results are easy to deliver if the person is well and expecting them but abnormal or unexpected results require time to explain.
- Serious results can upset people taking time to console them

### Patients make mistakes

- They incorrectly book short rather than long appointments
- Some don't plan well and paperwork needs to be done **NOW! Or else!** Some of the consequences are devastating for the patient and we can't punish them to make a point
- Some forget things at home needing people to search for them taking up time
- They run late too, upsetting the appointment balance

### Emotional problems require appropriate endings

- Some people cry in the room. It would be cruel and inhumane to try and rush them out unless a safe end point is reached. Sometimes the patient is aware of the emotional problem, sometimes it comes out by questioning from a good doctor - this is hard to predict (it also takes a while to document that consult).

#### **Patients are human**

- some people are scared about their health and simple things take longer to explain
- people may have disabilities – they take longer to sit down or enter the room and leave, need interpreters or have trouble understanding
- sometimes people need convincing
- sometimes people leave the serious problem to last minute

#### **Doctors are human**

- They get upset
- they get tired and need a coffee
- they need to go to the toilet
- they don't know everything and may need to speak to another doctor
- they get caught in traffic or arrive late
- they have bad days

#### **Not everything is available when needed**

- Doctors sometimes need to make calls between consultations
- Doctors get interruptions from hospital doctors wanting urgent information
- We rely on others; eg hospitals and other doctors to complete the consultation – chasing reports or results that were not sent correctly can take time

#### **Receptionists are human and can make mistakes – these should be rare**

- They can book the patients incorrectly
- They can double book patients when they shouldn't to help patients
- If rushed or stressed they can forget to arrive patients
- Computers crash, needing re booting
- they make mistakes arriving patients

**Please don't abuse staff – everyone is trying their best to be efficient , accurate and on time**