

## **Removal of Patients Policy**

The Surgery aims to provide the best possible health care for its patients. However there may be circumstances when it would be considered reasonable, or in the best interests of the patient and the practice, to remove patients from the list.

### **?? Situations, which justify removal**

#### **1. Violence:**

When a patient: -

- ?? Is physically violent or threatening towards a doctor, practice staff or other patients on the practice premises.
- ?? Causes physical damage to practice premises or other patient's property.
- ?? Gives verbal abuse or makes threats towards the doctor, practice staff or other patients.
- ?? Gives racist abuse, orally or physically.
- ?? Is violent or uses or condones threatening behaviour to doctors (or some other members of the primary health care team) while visiting the patient's home. Such behaviour may involve the patient, a relative, a household member, or pets (such as unchained dogs).

#### **2. Crime & Deception**

Where a patient: -

- ?? Fraudulently obtains drugs for non-medical reasons.
- ?? Deliberately lies to the doctor or other member of the primary health care team (e.g. by giving a false name or false medical history) in order to obtain a service or benefit by deception.
- ?? Attempts to use the doctor to conceal or aid any criminal activity.
- ?? Steals from practice premises.

#### **3. Distance**

?? Where a patient has moved out of the designated practice area and has failed to register with another GP.

#### **4. Embarkation**

?? Where a patient has moved abroad for a period of 3 months or more

## **5. Failure to attend pre-booked appointments**

Where a patient fails to attend pre-booked appointments on a number of occasions during a given period

## **6. Irretrievable Breakdown of the Doctor-Patient Relationship**

Where a patient's behaviour falls outside of that which is normally considered reasonable and leads to an irretrievable breakdown of the doctor-patient relationship

### **Procedure for Removal**

#### **1. Violence / Crime and Deception**

Any incident involving violence, crime or deception will be reported to the practice manager, who will complete an incident report and bring to the attention of the practice partners. Each individual case will be discussed at a Practice Meeting and a majority agreement will be reached.

Following agreement, the practice manager will write to the patient and explain the reasons for removal.

The exception to this is if a patient has to be reported to the police for violent behaviour towards any member of the practice staff when s/he may be immediately removed.

#### **2. Distance**

On notification that the patient is no longer living within the practice boundary, a letter will be sent to the patient advising of the need to re-register within the next 30 days.

If the patient has not re-registered, or contacted the surgery with a reasonable explanation, within the 30-day period, they will be removed from the practice list.

#### **3. Embarkation**

On notification that the patient has moved abroad the patient will be removed from the practice list within 3 months of that notification.

#### **4. Failure to attend pre-booked appointments**

The practice employs a DNA policy.

Following agreement, the practice manager will write to the patient and explain the reasons for removal.

#### **5. Guidance on removing patients due to irretrievable breakdown of the doctor patient relationship**

Occasionally patients persistently act inconsiderately and their behaviour falls outside that which is normally considered to be reasonable. In such circumstances there may be a complete breakdown in the doctor-patient relationship.

### **Steps to be taken within the practice**

☐☐ Inform all appropriate members of the practice about the problem. ☐☐ The patient and possible reasons for the patient's behaviour (e.g. disagreeableness, cultural differences, mental illness, personality disorder) will be discussed at a Practice Meeting

### **Steps to be taken with the patient**

- ☐☐ Inform the patient, either personally or in writing, that there is a problem as a first and only warning
- ☐☐ Explain the nature of the problem to the patient
- ☐☐ Offer the patient a chance to give their perspective and interpretation of the situation.
- ☐☐ if the problem re-occurs then take steps to formally remove patient from list and inform them of this decision

### **Steps to be taken in actually removing the patient**

- ☐☐ Inform the patient of the decision and the reason for removal from the list.
- ☐☐ Explain to the patient that he or she will not be left without a GP.
- ☐☐ Give the patient information on how to begin the process of registering with another GP.

### **Family Members**

When a decision is made to remove a patient from the practice list, the removal may well be extended to other members of the family or household.

The practice manager will write to the family / household offering an explanation for the removal. They will be allowed 4 weeks to re-register rather than being removed from the practice list immediately.

### **Responsibility**

Responsibility for implementing and monitoring the policy rests with the practice partners /practice manager.

The Partners at The Surgery re-affirm their commitment to do everything possible to protect staff, patients and visitors from unacceptable behaviour and their zero tolerance of any incident that causes hurt, alarm, damage or distress.