



Top Tips to Prevent Missed Visits

Definition of a Missed Visit:

A missed visit is where:

- An individual has not received a visit where one is scheduled, and
- Does not receive a visit before the next scheduled visit, and
- Has not been contacted to inform and rearrange the time of the rescheduled visit.

NB; further consideration is needed to be taken when looking at a missed **ESSENTIAL** visit. Missing a visit for a physio exercise programme is different from a visit for medication administration. Health and Social care providers have a duty to attend their visits within the allocated time as missed visits can have huge implications on the people being cared for. For people living with dementia or with other vulnerabilities, missed visits can be distressing if they aren't contacted to be informed of the changes.

Why do missed visits happen?

- Imbalance between low staffing and high service demand.
- IT scheduling error.
- Human error – not rescheduling follow up appointments correctly.
- Poor staff performance – poor time keeping or not reporting to senior staff that not all visits were completed to service users.

An organisational plan for responding to missed visits should include:

- How and when a missed visits will be communicated to the vulnerable adult or their carers.
- Emergency contact details should be kept up to date and known for all service users.
- Arrangements for family members, carers, or neighbours to visit instead.
- An assessment of risk and what should happen if a visit is missed.
- Patients should be encouraged to contact clinical teams if they haven't arrived for the visit.

Top tips to prevent missed visits from becoming safeguarding concerns

Many cases of missed visits can be prevented from becoming safeguarding concerns. To try and prevent this we can do the following:

- Set out patient expectations from first visit – distribute a leaflet which highlights the potential chance that a future appointment might need to be rescheduled if service demand is too great and how this will be done.
- Professional who realises that they are going to miss a visit must immediately report and contact the service user to apologise and inform them why the visit will need to be rescheduled before the time the visit was supposed to go ahead (Duty of Candour). If the visit is for something that can't be rescheduled for another time, then the care worker needs to arrange for that support to be delivered and prioritised immediately.
- Robust procedures to be put in place to ensure that there are sufficient pools of staff that can be mobilised at short notice in the event of high service demand, unplanned absences, or an emergency – e.g., cross teams working, agency staff, deployment of staff, referrals/access to an out of hours service.
- Have an organisational written policy/procedure in place that allows formal prioritisation of patients in relation to clinical need in case of high workload demands.
- Daily morning caseload meetings or daily electronic system checks to ensure all visits are correctly allocated to the correct professionals and can be achieved.