

# The impact of missed doctors' appointments

Lots of people comment about the time they have to wait to get a routine doctor's appointment. However, the sad fact remains that, for a variety of reasons, **patients missing appointments each year add up to about 7 weeks of wasted doctor and nurse time each year** which has a serious impact on waiting times.

Reasons for missing appointments range from patients who are too ill to come to the surgery, hospitalisation, memory problems, to too many patients who just forget, feel better, or who are too busy to bother to attend. Both surgeries in Blandford work hard to cut the number of missed appointments. Texting reminders has been a success story, but only if the surgery has an up to date mobile number or email address.

So, what can **you** do to cut waiting times?

1. Record the appointment and check it doesn't clash with a holiday, for example
2. Inform the surgery if you are unable attend an appointment as it can be offered to someone else, even at the last minute
3. Inform the surgery if you, or a relative, is hospitalised - the hospital will not tell the surgery
4. Make sure your surgery has an up to date phone number, mobile number and email address - to text reminders, for example

**You can easily cancel your appointment** by phone, online, email (Eagle House) or text. Please see the Eagle House or Whitecliff Surgery websites, or ask at your surgery reception, for more information.

Finally, if you are moving out of the area, don't forget to tell the surgery too.