

A Clinical Guideline for: Women who miss Antenatal Appointments

For Use in:	Maternity Services
By:	Midwives
For:	Women who miss antenatal appointments
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Compliance links: <i>(is there any NICE related to guidance)</i>	No
If Yes - does the strategy/policy deviate from the recommendations of NICE? If so why?	N/A

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Version and Document Control

Version No.	Date of Update	Change Description	Author
5	22/10/2024	Rewritten to ensure current practice: links to other Guidelines/SOPS added	C Russell

A Clinical Guideline for: Women who miss Antenatal Appointments

Objectives

This guideline aims to ensure that all women who are booked with the maternity services and fail to attend an antenatal appointment are followed up, with any barriers to uptake of care addressed in order to provide women with optimal care.

Responsibility of Relevant Staff Groups

Community Midwives

The community midwife (CMW) has a continuing responsibility to all women booked in her care, including those who miss antenatal appointments either by phone, virtually or face to face also known as Did Not Attend (DNA). This may be for a variety of reasons which can range from the benign to the suspicious:

- Miscarriage
- Early pregnancy complications and admission (e.g. hyperemesis)
- Change in booking hospital / relocation to another area
- Misunderstanding of appointment (particularly where there are language problems or learning difficulties)
- Alternative health beliefs leading to lack of engagement in antenatal care, including women who are clear that they do not to accept any antenatal care

Potential at risk women:

- Women with complicated pregnancies or maternal health conditions
- All women with complex social factors such as those living in poverty, homeless women, those with substance misuse, women who are recent arrivals as migrants, women with difficulty speaking or understanding English, women suffering domestic abuse, asylum seekers and women aged under 20 (NICE 2010).
- Women who have been assessed as lacking capacity
- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic groups (BAME).

For this group of women it is essential that all avenues of communication have been tried in order to make contact, however the right of the woman to decline care must at all times be respected.

Caseload Checking: Community midwife to maintain up to date caseload, signing each month to confirm antenatal attendance of all women at each scheduled appointment. Each caseload to have next appointment due date recorded (See Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Community Midwifery Caseload Management [Trustdocs Id 18735](#))

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Any missed appointments including actions taken should all be documented on Euroking. The caseloading midwife and Team Leader should be informed by email of missed appointments and any action taken. The Community Team Leader and caseloading midwife should be informed of any woman that is not contactable by the end of the working day so this can be followed up the next working day.

Virtual Antenatal Appointments

If this is the first missed virtual antenatal appointment for the patient a further virtual appointment can be made for the following week, unless the midwife investigating the missed appointment determines otherwise. All 3rd missed appointments must have a face to face appointment arranged.

Hospital Midwife

For those women who miss antenatal appointments within the hospital, the midwife in Antenatal Clinic will take responsibility for following up the first and second missed appointments.

Consultant Obstetrician

In all situations where there have been three missed appointments, the responsible consultant will inform the woman's general practitioner in writing, and request a home visit within 7 days by the Community Midwife or/and joint visit with community midwife and Health visitor.

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Guidance for missed appointments

Community Care Process:

<p>1st and 2nd Community</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Euroking patient history/alerts. • Check for any inpatient activity i.e. miscarried, attendance at McCloud Maternity Assessment Unit (MMAU). • Contact GP to see if pregnancy remains ongoing and demographics are correct. • Attempt to contact woman by telephone on two occasions, at different times of the day • Case loading midwife/Community Team Leader sends further 1 week appointment, followed by text message appointment reminder. If it is the 2nd DNA for the patient, the next appointment must be arranged as a face to face. • Notify the Team Leader and case loading midwife if unable to contact patient. Message to be communicated via email. • Complete Euroking 'Missed Contact' record.
<p>3rd Community DNA</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Euroking patient history/alerts. • Check for any inpatient activity i.e. miscarried. • Liaise with Antenatal Clinic midwife check Astraia for any recent scan reports i.e. Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit -EPAU- attendance) • Contact GP to see if pregnancy remains ongoing and demographics are correct. • Attempt to contact woman by telephone and establish reasons for non-attendance. • If community midwife still unable to contact woman attempt home visit within 7 days. Notify the women in writing of date and time of proposed visit. If not home leave a card with a message to call the team. Letter to be sent by CMW. • Community Midwife to inform Health Visitor. • Involve appropriate support agencies – particularly where there maybe child protection concerns – complete local safeguarding form for welfare issues. • Formulate individual plan of management with Team Leader/Community Matron. Document this clearly on Euroking. • Complete missed contact on Euroking.

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Hospital Antenatal Clinic Process:

<p>1st and 2nd Hospital Consultant Obstetric Clinic DNA:</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Euroking patient history/alerts. • Check PAS and ICE for any inpatient activity ie miscarried, inpatient on Cley or attendance on MMAU. • Check Astraia for any recent scan reports (EPAU attendance) • Contact GP to see if pregnancy remains ongoing and demographics are correct. • Attempt to contact woman by telephone on two occasions, at different times of the day • Send further 1 week appointment, followed by text message appointment reminder send by Antenatal Clinic admin staff. If it is the 2nd DNA for the patient, the next appointment must be arranged as a face to face. • Inform the community midwife via email of non-engagement. • Complete Euroking missed Contact record.
<p>3rd Hospital Consultant Obstetric Clinic DNA:</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Euroking patient history/alerts. • Check PAS and ICE for any inpatient activity ie miscarried. • Check Astraia for any recent scan reports (EPAU attendance) • Contact GP to see if pregnancy remains ongoing and demographics are correct. • Contact Community Midwife for any information she can provide. Community midwife to inform Health Visitor. • Attempt to contact woman by telephone and establish reasons for non-attendance. • If unable to contact woman notify Community Midwife ask to attempt home visit within 7 days. • Involve appropriate support agencies – particularly where there maybe child protection concerns – complete local safeguarding form for welfare issues. • Formulate individual plan of management with named Consultant. • Consultant to write to GP and patient regarding non-attendance with maternity service.

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Actions for any woman not attending for ultrasound scan:

<p>Dating, Nuchal or Anomaly Ultrasound DNA</p>	<p>Antenatal Clinic Midwife Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check Euroking history and alerts. • Check PAS and ICE for any inpatient activity i.e. miscarried. • Check Astraia for any recent scan reports (EPAU attendance) • Contact GP to see if pregnancy remains ongoing and demographics are correct. • Attempt to contact woman by telephone if these details are available, on two occasions, at different times of the day • Complete Euroking missed contact record • Send further appointment if required.
<p>Growth Ultrasound DNA</p>	<p>Antenatal Clinic Midwife Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check if patient is inpatient or has given birth. • Contact GP and/or CMW to ascertain if moved out of area. • Has changed her appointment. • Send further appointment if required. • Complete Euroking missed contact record.

Process for any women declining Antenatal care:

<p>Women declining Antenatal Care</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community midwife to inform Team Leader and Community Matron • Offer appointments / home visits for discussion of options for care • Provide woman with copy of the NICE Antenatal Care guidelines (2008, updated 2019) • If the woman is clear that she understands the benefits of receiving antenatal care and the risks of declining care but still chooses to decline this she has a right to do so. • Seek support from appropriate Specialist Midwife team/Consultant Obstetrician. • Involve appropriate support agencies – particularly where there maybe safeguarding concerns or mental capacity concerns • Complete local safeguarding form for information only (unless specific welfare concerns) • Ensure the woman is aware she can seek care at any point should she change her mind and has contact details to do so • Document all discussions and plans made on Euroking, including Personal Care and Support plan (PCSP).
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Clinical Audit Standards

The Maternity Services are committed to the philosophy of clinical audit, as part of its Clinical Governance programme. The standards contained in this clinical guideline will be subject to continuous audit, with multidisciplinary review of the audit results at one of the monthly departmental Clinical Governance meetings. The results will also be

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summarised and a list of recommendations formed into an action plan, with a commitment to re-audit within three years, resources permitting.

Summary of Development and Consultation Process Undertaken Before Registration And Dissemination

In 2021 the document was reviewed by the ANC team leader with input from the Community Midwifery Matron: Community Midwife Team leaders: Practice Development Midwives; Clinical Effectiveness Midwife . It was sent to senior midwives within Maternity and to the obstetric guidelines group for comment before ratification at the Obstetric Guidelines Meeting

Distribution List

Community Team Leaders
Divisional Midwifery Director
Clinical Midwifery Managers
Trust Intranet

References

1. Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths in the United Kingdom. (2001). *Why Mothers Die 1997-1999*. London: CEMD.
2. MBRRACE-UK (2012) Saving Lives, Improving Mothers' Lives – *Lessons learned to inform future maternity care from the UK and Ireland Confidential Enquiries into Maternal Deaths and Morbidity 2009-12*. Oxford: National Perinatal Epidemiology Unit, Univeristy of Oxford..
3. Maternity Care Working Party. (2006). *Modernising Maternity Care – A Commissioning Toolkit for England (2nd Edition)*. London: The National Childbirth Trust, The Royal College of Midwives, The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists. Available at: www.rcog.org.uk
4. National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence. (2008) updated 2019 . Antenatal care: Routine care for the healthy pregnant woman. London: NICE. Available at: www.nice.org.uk

Source Documents

Antenatal Booking and Subsequent Appointments Document [Trustdocs Id: 795](#)

Care of Vulnerable Women in Pregnancy [Trustdocs Id: 10046](#)

Macleod Maternity Assessment Unit (MMAU) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) [Trustdocs Id: 11525](#)

Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Community Midwifery Caseload Management [Trustdocs Id: 18735](#)

5.

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Appendix 1

Missed appointment letter to be used by Community Midwives:



Dear

I am writing to you as you did not attend your antenatal appointment with the community midwife on Date: Time:

It is important that you have regular assessments with your midwife, so that the health of you and your baby can be monitored.

I have therefore made a further appointment for us to meet as below:

Date Time

Venue

Please could you try to attend for this appointment? If the date and/or time is not convenient please telephone medicom on 01603 3481222.

Yours sincerely

Community Midwife

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Appendix 2

Missed appointment letter to be used by Antenatal Clinic Midwives:



Dear

I am writing to you as you did not attend your antenatal appointment with the Antenatal Clinic Doctor on Date: Time:

It is important that you have regular assessments with your midwife, so that the health of you and your baby can be monitored.

I have therefore made a further appointment for us to meet as below:

Date Time

Venue

Please could you try to attend for this appointment? If the date and/or time is not convenient please telephone the Antenatal Clinic on 01603 286795.

Yours sincerely

Antenatal Clinic Team