

Outpatient Services

SUBJECT/TITLE:	No Show Policy
PURPOSE:	To ensure that clients/patients have access to services when needed by maximizing the utilization of available appointments. To provide a mechanism for appropriately managing patients who fail to utilize assigned appointments times without sufficient notice.
DEPARTMENT/SCOPE:	Appointments made with Outpatient providers to include Psychiatrists, Nurse Practitioners, Psychologists and Therapists.

POLICY:

In order to provide access to services the Vera French Community Mental Health Center has established parameters in the identification of “no show” appointments as well as a multipronged approach in management of patients who frequently “no show” for appointments.

If a patient is unable to keep their appointment, they are required to cancel with appropriate prior notice (24 hours). Failure of a patient to cancel their appointment without a 24-hour notice is considered a “No Show” for purposes of this policy. To assist patients in keeping scheduled appointments, various courtesy reminders may be utilized which include, phone calls, letters, and appointment cards. All forms of reminders are a courtesy service from Vera French. Not receiving a reminder is not a valid reason for missing an appointment or not calling with 24 hours notice to reschedule.

DEFINITIONS:

No show: any appointment whereby the patient fails to show or does not call 24 hours prior to the appointment to reschedule.

Same day cancel: any appointment whereby the patient cancels 24 hours or less before their appointment. Same day cancels are equivalent to no shows as they are difficult to fill.

Walk-in Clinic (WIC): A clinic run by a prescriber to be used for patients that have recently no showed for their regular provider and need to be seen for further prescriptions to be filled.

Prescriber: A clinician who is licensed to prescribe medication through Federal and State Agencies and through the VFCMHC credentialing process and is an employee or contracted provider at the Vera French CMHC or at its affiliate programs in good standing. This includes MDs, DOs, and ARNPs.

Therapist: A clinician who is licensed to provide therapy through their State licensing Board and through the VFCMHC credentialing process and is an employee or contracted provider at the Vera French CMHC or its affiliate programs in good standing.

Clinician Override: The patient's clinician may override any step of the No Show procedure at any time for clinical reasons or extenuating circumstances.

Missed Appointment Brochure: Pamphlet to be handed out to all Patients that describes the importance of keeping one's appointments and the VFCMHC's policy on missed appointments. This will be handed out during the Intake process and initially by the Front Desk for the first year that this Policy is implemented.

PROCEDURE:

If a patient misses their scheduled appointment without notifying the organization, an attempt is made to contact the patient to follow up. This follow up can take the form of a letter or phone call. All attempts to contact patients will be documented in the Electronic Medical Record (EMR).

I. INITIAL APPOINTMENTS-NEW PATIENTS

Due to the overwhelming need for mental health services any patient who does not call to cancel their initial appointment 24 hours in advance will not be given another appointment for at least 6 months. This policy is communicated all new patients.

II. MEDICATION APPOINTMENTS

After it has become clear that the Patient failed to show for their appointment, the Front Desk will communicate this to the provider by changing the patient appointment status to NO SHOW. NO SHOW will be reflected on the Prescriber's Inbox screen via the EMR. Support staff will be assigned to generate a No Show letter via the EMR and mail it to the patient by the end of the next Business day.

For those patients who continue to No show for appointments on an ongoing basis within a 12 month period, the procedure outlined below will be utilized.

PLEASE NOTE THAT CLINICIAN OVERRIDE MAY OCCUR AT ANY POINT IN THE BELOW MENTIONED PROCESS

NO SHOW #1

Action Taken:

1. **Prescriber No Show letter #1** sent by Support Staff.
2. The Prescriber will review with the Patient at the next attended visit, potential barriers that may hinder the patient from attending visits on a regular basis and attempt to assist the patient with these barriers through available services. (i.e. VF Transporter, School transporters, Case Managers, bus routes, etc.)

NO SHOW #2 and #3

Action Taken:

1. **Prescriber No Show letter #2** will be sent by Support Staff.
2. Walk in Clinic (WIC) alert will be placed in the EMR by Support Staff. Patient must be seen in WIC before any further regular appointments are scheduled.
3. Support staff will place an alert in the EHR by clicking the Alert button on the BH home page and check the 'Walk-in Clinic' and 'No medications refilled until seen in the office' buttons.

NO SHOW #4

Action Taken:

1. **Prescriber No Show Closure Letter** will be signed by the Prescriber and sent by the Support Staff to the patient.
2. A blank Authorization to Release Information will also be sent with along with the No show letter.
3. Prescriber will include prescriptions for 30 days worth of medication for the patient if clinically appropriate.
4. The Prescriber will also do a Discharge Summary utilizing the Discharge template in the EHR.
5. The Support Staff will also place an alert in the EMR that the patient may not reschedule for 6 months from the time of the missed appointment.
6. The Support Staff will alert the Business office that the Patient's case is to be closed.

In 6 months, if the Patient wishes to return, he or she will need to go through the Intake department and be seen at a Pre-appointment visit. The patient may not be directly scheduled with the Prescriber until this has been done. Once the Patient has attended the Pre-appointment visit, they are then scheduled with the Prescriber for an Updated Psychiatric Evaluation.

EXTREME NON-COMPLIANCE WITH TREATMENT

In cases of extreme non-compliance with treatment such as over 50% of appointments missed or over 4 appointments missed in a 12 month period; misuse/abuse of medications; or "Doctor-shopping", the Provider may close the case and discharge the patient permanently from the Vera French CMHC per the Termination of Care Policy and Procedure. A discharge summary is required.

WALK-IN CLINIC (WIC) PROCEDURE

Vera French Community Mental Health Center will offer a Walk-in Clinic for patients who frequently “no show” for appointments. Walk in clinic will be staffed by a Prescriber as defined within the policy. A WIC Prescriber Schedule will be developed by the Clinical Director on an Annual basis and will be set up by Alphabetical order and enter into the EMR schedule. Every Prescriber will participate in the WIC unless excused by the Clinical Director and/or Medical Director.

1. The WIC will be held once per week on Wednesday from 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM.
2. Patients attending the WIC are seen on a first-come, first-serve basis by the WIC Prescriber. WIC patients may only be seen during this time.
3. Patients will be checked in at the Front Desk and seen by the Medical Assistants via normal procedures. The Front Desk will create an encounter for the WIC patient into the WIC Prescriber’s schedule.
4. The WIC Prescriber will see the patient for a Medication check only (10-15 minutes) and at that time will only provide refills of the Patient’s medication to last until he or she is seen by their regular Prescriber. Extensive refills should not be provided as this will encourage future No Shows. Documentation of the visit will occur within the EMR like any other Medication visit. The Prescriber should document within the Note, however, that the Patient is being seen in the WIC to avoid future confusion.
5. The WIC Prescriber will not change the Patient’s medication regimen except in extreme cases. Once the patient has been seen in the WIC, he or she may contact their regular Prescriber for any changes that may be required.
6. The WIC Prescriber will review with the Patient the importance of making regularly scheduled appointment with their regular Prescriber.
7. The WIC is to be used only for Patients that have failed to show for their regular appointment and have received **Prescriber No Show letter #2**. No other patients may be seen in the WIC. The WIC may not be used for Intakes or visits requiring more than 15 minutes.
8. Once the Patient has been seen in the WIC, they may receive an appointment with their regular Prescriber at Checkout. They should be seen by their regular Prescriber in a month if at all possible to re-establish a more therapeutic Patient-Provider working relationship. Also at Checkout, the scheduler will remove the WIC Alert in the EMR.
9. There will be separate WIC’s for Children and Adults but both will be run in the same fashion.

III. THERAPY APPOINTMENTS

After it has become clear that the Patient failed to show for their appointment, the Front Desk will communicate this to the provider by changing the patient appointment status to NO SHOW. NO SHOW will be reflected on the Therapist's Inbox screen via the EMR. Support Staff will be assigned to generate a No Show letter via the EMR and mail it to the patient by the end of the Business day.

For those patients who continue to No show for appointments on an ongoing basis within a 12 month period, the procedure outlined below will be utilized.

PLEASE NOTE THAT CLINICIAN OVERRIDE MAY OCCUR AT ANY POINT IN THE BELOW MENTIONED PROCESS

NO SHOW #1

Action Taken:

1. **Therapist No Show letter #1** sent by Support Staff.
2. The Therapist will review with the Patient at the next attended visit, potential barriers that may hinder the patient attending visits on a regular basis and attempt to assist the patient with these barriers through available services. (i.e. VF Transporter, School transporters, Case Managers, bus routes, etc.)

NO SHOW #2

Action Taken:

1. **Therapist No Show letter #2** will be sent by Support Staff.
2. The Therapist should review with the Patient at the next attended visit, potential barriers that may hinder the patient attending visits on a regular basis and attempt to assist the patient with these barriers through available services. (i.e. VF Transporter, School transporters, Case Managers, etc.)

NO SHOW #3

Action Taken:

1. **Therapist No Show Closure Letter** will be signed by the Therapist and sent by the Support Staff to the patient.
2. A blank Authorization to Release Information will also be sent with along with the No show letter.
3. The Therapist will also do a Discharge Summary utilizing the Discharge template in the EHR.
4. The Support Staff will also place an alert in the EMR that the patient may not reschedule for 6 months from the time of the missed appointment.
5. The Support Staff will alert the Business office that the Patient's case is to be closed.

In 6 months, if the Patient wishes to return, he or she will need to go through the Intake department and be seen at a Pre-appointment visit. The patient may not be directly scheduled

with the Therapist until this has been done. Once the Patient has attended the Pre-appointment visit, they will be scheduled with the Therapist for an Updated Mental Health Evaluation.

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