

## Flexibility to support your organisation’s approach to managing non-attendance (DNAs)

DAWN Safety Monitoring has a best practice, standardised approach to managing non-attendance but can also be adapted to suit a range of organisational approaches and care models as illustrated below.

| Responsibility                    | Consultant   | Nurse   | Admin  |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>Time Spent &amp; Intervals</b> | 1hr per week allocated to non-attendance follow-up<br>-<br>All DNA patients viewed daily by consultant on rota                               | Checked once a week<br>-<br>Non-attenders split by clinic<br>-<br>Fixed five day interval for all   | DNA list checked daily<br>-<br>Non-attendance intervals currently being reviewed by clinical staff   |
| <b>Communication</b>              | Letter dictated by consultant outside of DAWN<br>-<br>All letters sent to patient & GP<br>-<br>Evidence of patient harm prevention with DAWN | First DNA letter to patient after five days<br>-<br>Second DNA letter to patient & GP after a further fourteen days<br>-<br>Third and final letter to ask GP to stop prescribing<br>-<br>All letters sent from DAWN | Letters sent directly from DAWN<br>-<br>Three DNA letters sent one month apart<br>-<br>Fourth letter ‘non-compliance’ sent to GP to stop prescribing |

### Consultant-led Approach - Leighton Hospital

Consultants work on DAWN on a rota and they have factored DAWN into their job planning, allocating 1 hour per week, over 5 days, in the job schedule due to the DAWN system’s role as an important safety system.

The DAWN system is accessed each day by the consultant on rota and the patients on the non-attendance list view are reviewed for that day regardless of which consultant they are assigned to.

Whilst DAWN captures the patient as a non-attender, currently the consultants dictate a patient specific letter outside of the DAWN system to each patient on the list.

The letter requests that the patient has their blood test or their medication will be delayed in the interests of safety. A copy of the letter also goes to the patient’s GP.

The consultant will also check on patients non-attendance if:

- They are prescribing alongside the GP
  - Often, multiple medications are prescribed by both the consultant and the GP regardless of where the bloods are being done. In this case, the patient is kept active on DAWN and a 3 monthly reminder to check bloods is added if the GP is doing the blood tests. The consultant will send a letter to the GP if the patient is not having blood tests.
- The GP has taken over prescribing
  - The patient is left active on DAWN system for 3 months after they have been passed to the GP for monitoring. This enables the consultant to keep track of whether patient is sticking to bloods and if not, the GP will get a letter to say that the patient has been discharged to their care but they haven’t had a blood test

The following is an example of how the approach to non-attendance used at Leighton with the support of the DAWN system has prevented patient harm:

- A patient under hospital monitoring had been flagged on the DAWN system as having not had their bloods. This was picked up on the day a consultant was on rota who wasn’t the patients consultant.

- A letter was sent to the patient that day and they came into have their blood test shortly after.
- Their results came back with Hb at 45 and were flagged on DAWN immediately.
- The patient was brought to hospital and treated the same day the abnormal results were flagged on DAWN.
- The patient's non-attendance and abnormal results were flagged on DAWN before the haematology lab reported it and as a result enabled swift action to request the patient to have a blood test and subsequently treat them as an urgent case, preventing any harm to the patient.

## **Nurse-led Approach - West Middlesex Hospital**

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The non-attendance list view in DAWN is divided into clinic so each nurse can see their own patients and once a week, the nurses go through the full non-attendance list and perform a 'sense-check' to determine which patients are true non-attenders (see bullet points below). The intervals for non-attenders are fixed at 5 days after due date for all patients with the exception of new starters on 2 weekly monitoring who are contacted by phone after two days.

Patients who are NOT 'true' attenders may fall in to this category because:

- They have open blood results on DAWN due to an outstanding action required by the healthcare professional or the system is waiting on additional test results from the lab
- The department factored in an early blood test with GP that wasn't done. For example 12 weekly interval, and at 10 weeks patient had a doctor's appointment. Patient advised to have their bloods done while they are there. Blood test was put on DAWN at 10 weeks rather than 12 so actually 2 weeks early, not late.

For true non-attenders, a first DNA letter is sent directly from the patient's record in DAWN. This informs the patient that they have missed their blood test and requests that they get their bloods done.

If the patient has still not had their blood test done 2 weeks after the first DNA letter is sent, a second letter goes out. This second letter is automatically copied to the patient's GP so that if they are prescribing, they are made aware that the patient hasn't turned up for their monitoring as scheduled.

Letters include the name of the drug the patient is on; the date the patient was due to have their blood test and the interval they are on. This information is pulled out of the patient record and automatically inserted into the letter when it is selected in the DAWN system.

If the patient fails to turn up 2 weeks after the second letter goes out a 'Stop' letter is sent to the GP and copied to patient asking them to stop prescribing until monitoring is back in place for the patient.

## **Admin-led Approach - Kettering Hospital**

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Intervals for flagging non-attendance on the DAWN system are currently being reviewed to ensure they are suitable for all patients.

The admin staff access the DAWN non-attendance list view on a daily basis and work through it patient by patient. Staff go into the DAWN patient record to check that the patient is a genuine non-attender. If they are, a non-attendance (DNA) letter is sent directly from the patient record.

These 'Late Blood' letters are currently sent 1 month apart from each other and the patient will receive up to three letters.

If the patient has still not attended after 3 late blood letters have been sent and are now 3 months behind on their blood tests, a non-compliance letter is sent to both the patient and the GP from the DAWN system informing both that the patient is not fulfilling their monitoring agreement.

This is then left in the hands of the GP but the patient will usually have their blood test done at the final non-compliance prompt. If not, the medication is then put on hold until the blood test is done. If the GP prescribes, the decision is up to them whether they continue to prescribe with the knowledge that the patient is not being actively monitored.

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For further information contact the 4S DAWN team on [015395 63091](tel:01539563091), or email [sales@4s-dawn.com](mailto:sales@4s-dawn.com)

