



## TOOL 2.8: Patient Navigator Protocols – Example

This tool is a detailed example of what a Patient Navigator protocol should look like. The example used here is a protocol for what the Patient Navigator is supposed to do if a patient does not keep an appointment. Start to think about major events that your program intends to use as reason to start navigating a patient and procedures you would like your Patient Navigator to follow in order to address a given event, such as a missed appointment. You will need to make protocols for Patient Navigators to follow accordingly.

Happy Health Center  
Standard Operating Procedures  
Issued: 6/29/10  
Last Reviewed: 12/6/11

### DNKA Protocols: ‘Active Patients’

**Purpose:** To outline the Patient Navigator protocols for following up on an active patient that DNKA (Did Not Keep Appointment) to MD and/or imaging appt in breast clinic.

**Contents:** Steps that PN takes when active patients DNKA, and the procedures for ending navigation on these patients.

**Definitions:**

DNKA = Did Not Keep Appointment

PN = Patient Navigator

Appt = Appointment

**On the day of missed appt:**

- 1) PN documents in case management form that active patient DNKA
  - Select ‘DNKA’ from drop-down menu in “Results – Clinic”
  - If patient also DNKA to imaging appt, free-text this in comments under “Results – Clinic”
  
- 2) PN calls patient:
  - PN documents outcome under “Contacts – Phone”
  - If patient answers  PN asks why patient missed appt and offers to reschedule appt
    - PN documents reason of DNKA in “Actions/Barriers” if possible
    - PN documents new appt date/time in “Scheduled Appointments”
    - PN sends appt letter to patient if requested
    - PN writes in new ‘Navigation Plan’,
  - If voicemail is reached  PN leaves message re DNKA with PN’s direct extension as call-back #
  - If no answer/disconnected/wrong number  PN makes note in chart
  
- 3) If PN does not reach patient by phone:
  - PN sends DNKA letter to patient
  - PN calls referring provider/PCP office
    - # for contact person at this site is found in patient medical record

- If PN speaks to someone in person  inform that patient DNKA and request that message be forwarded to referring provider/PCP
  - PN leaves direct extension as call-back #
  - PN verifies patient address and contact #'s
  - Update patient's chart if information is different
  - If voicemail is reached  PN leaves message w/ patient name, DOB, and DNKA status
  - PN leaves direct extension as call-back #
- 4) If PN does not reach someone at referring provider/PCP office:
  - PN sends DNKA letter to referring provider/PCP
  - If MD is at Happy Health Center, PN may send flag, e-mail, or internal letter
- 5) If PN is unable to reach patient  PN signs form to put tracking on hold for one week
  - PN documents phone-calls, letters, and time spent
  - 'Navigation Plan' = "Active patient for (reason) DNKA"
  - Navigation Status – PN high-lights "Active"
  - PN sends reminder to herself due in 1 week "check appt status/call patient – 2x"

**One week after missed appt:**

- 6) PN checks if patient has rescheduled appt
  - If yes → PN documents new appt date/time in form, selects patient's status as 'inactive' and selects new 'date to reactivate,' and signs form
  - If no → PN makes another call to patient (*see Step 2*)
- 7) PN calls referring provider/PCP office (*see Step 3*)
  - PN checks last appt made by patient at this site and asks if patient has any upcoming appts
- 8) PN checks for upcoming appts at BMC
  - If patient has upcoming appt, PN flags provider to request assistance in getting in touch with patient
- 9) If PN is unable to reach patient → PN signs form to put tracking on hold for one week (*see Step 5*)
  - PN sends reminder to herself due in 1 week "check appt status/call patient – 3x"

**Two weeks after missed appt:**

- 10) PN checks if patient has rescheduled (*see Steps 6 & 20*)
- 11) PN calls referring provider/PCP office (*see Step 7*)
  - PN informs office of repeated attempts to contact patient by phone and mail
  - PN explains that certified letter will be mailed to patient
  - PN leaves direct extension as call-back #
- 12) PN flags MD
  - PN explains active patient's DNKA and unsuccessful attempt to reach patient
  - PN states that certified letter will be mailed, unless MD specifies otherwise
- 13) PN mails certified letter to patient
  - PN leaves direct extension as call-back #
- 14) PN ends navigation in form

- PN documents phone-calls, flags, certified letter, and time spent
- 'Navigation Plan' = "Active patient for (reason) DNKA"
- Navigation Status – PN high-lights "Resolved"
  - 'Diagnostic work-up completed?' → "No"
  - 'If not, why not?' → PN selects "Certified letter sent"

**Phone #'s to leave patients to call-back when you leave a message:**

PN's direct extension  
(555) 555-5555 (Happy Health Center)