



Garrison Health Services (GHS) is underpinned by quality clinical frameworks and processes to ensure best practice healthcare delivery.

GHS provides health services to over 60 000 permanent and 20 000 reservist uniformed Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel. There will be times when an Entitled Personnel (EP) does not attend an appointment pre-booked with your practice.

EP attendance at a health care appointment is considered a duty commitment (place of parade) and is subject to the requirements of the Absence from Duty regulations under the ADF Disciplinary Act. Given this context, there is an important focus to monitor EPs attendance at scheduled appointments. It is also necessary to manage the impact of a loss in time and costs to your practice. FTA's also have health implications for an EPs effective recovery from injury or illness.

ADF steps for monitoring FTA appointments

The ADF views instances of FTA as avoidable occurrences. The Joint Health Unit Commanding Officer (CO) takes the following steps to effectively enforce the EPs attendance of medical appointments:

1. Each month the ADF identifies all instances of FTA that have occurred in the previous month.
2. Key information for each instance is recorded.
3. The FTA information is supplied to the EPs Unit CO, who determines appropriate action depending on the circumstance. This can include, but is not limited, to an EP:
 - forgetting a scheduled appointment (once only)
 - unavoidably required for operational reasons
 - flagged as a repeat FTA offender
 - rescheduling an appointment not within the acceptable timeframe identified by the practice.
4. Subsequent actions taken may include:
 - requesting an explanation
 - undertaking ADF discipline action; and/or
 - seeking reimbursement for any fees incurred.

The On-base Health Centre and GHS Central Appointments Team (CAT) work closely when booking the initial appointment to ensure any special instructions are taken into consideration to reduce unavailability. Any follow-up consultations are to be arranged between the service provider and the EP.

How you can assist to reduce FTA's

The ADF and GHS are aware of the impact and inconvenience FTA's can have on your practice.

1. **Notify** the relevant On-base Health Centre when an EP does not attend an appointment.

This is especially important for Mental Health providers as the consequences of an EP missing a scheduled Mental Health treatment may be more complex than simply forgetting the appointment.

2. **Send a SMS** appointment reminder 48 hours prior to a scheduled appointment. This will assist in the reduction of forgotten appointments*.

**SMS appointment reminders are proven to be an effective method of reducing FTA rates in the medical industry.*

FTA fees

If an EP fails to attend a scheduled appointment, your practice may invoice GHS for the fee of the appointment, in line with your normal process for patients that fail to attend appointments. Invoices must be clearly marked as *Did not attend* or *Failed to attend*.

Please note: FTA fees should not represent any form of missed treatment

For further information:

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Go to: medibankhealth.com.au/garrisonhealthservices