

PHONE CALLS TO OVERDUE PATIENTS WITH HYPERTENSION

Phone calls are one of the most effective ways to return patients to care.

Call script

Tip: Your goal is to convince patients to return to care. Please try to listen to patients to understand their concerns. Friendly communication, empathy and concern for patients is very important for a successful call. Avoid shaming or blaming.

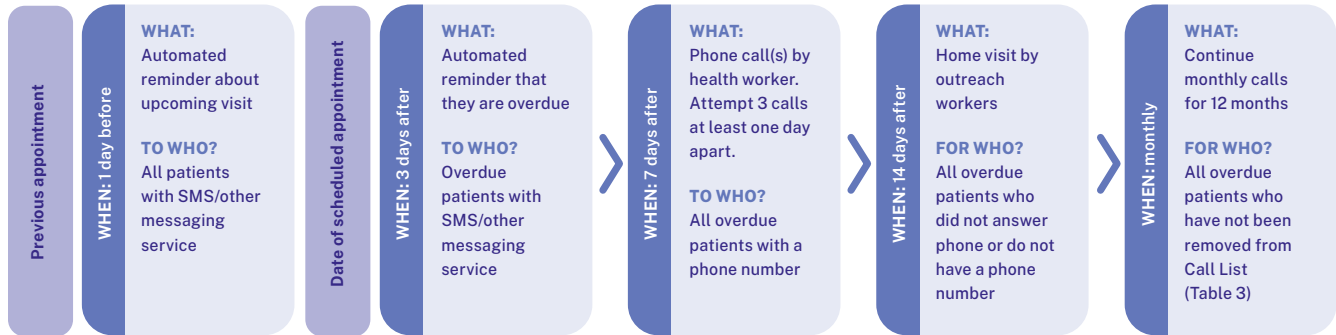
<p>1. INTRODUCE YOURSELF</p>	<p>Introduce yourself, your facility, and the reason you are calling. Ask to speak with the patient. If patient is unavailable, leave a message with a call back number or find a better time or phone number to reach the patient.</p>
<p>2. PROVIDE BACKGROUND</p>	<p>When the patient is on the phone, provide background on why a visit to check the patient's blood pressure is important and the goal of the call (get the patient to come for a follow up visit).</p>
<p>3. REASON FOR MISSED VISIT & ADDRESS CONCERNS</p>	<p>Ask why the patient missed their visit. Record the reason and address any concerns the patient has about visiting.</p>
<p>4. SCHEDULE THE VISIT</p>	<p>Advise the patient to come for follow-up as soon as possible. Provide them with the days/times they can visit the NCD clinic.</p>
<p>5. PREPARE PATIENT FOR VISIT</p>	<p>Advise patient to take their medications before coming to the facility and bring any required items with them. If medicines are free, mention they can collect free medicines at the facility.</p>
<p>6. WRAP UP CALL</p>	<p>Thank patient for their time.</p>
<p>7. REMEMBER TO RECORD</p>	<p>1. Reason for missed visit, and 2. Outcome of call for every call.</p>



Timing and frequency of calls

- Call overdue patients **one week** after a missed visit.
- Make **at least 3 attempts** to call a patient on different days before escalating to a home visit if they cannot be reached.

Suggested timeline* summary for patient outreach



*timeline and outreach methods should be adapted to local context and prioritization based on capacity

Providing support for common reasons patients miss their visits: responses and interventions

Reason for missed visit	Response or intervention
Patient says: "I feel fine and don't need medicine"	Remind them that they may not feel any symptoms with hypertension. It is, however, important to take their medicines regularly to prevent heart attacks or strokes.
Patient says: "The hospital is too far away and has long lines"	Suggest that they visit a smaller facility providing care that is close to their home (if feasible).
Patient says: "The medicine is not working for me" or are having side effects	Suggest that they meet with the doctor to discuss possible reasons and solutions.
Patient says: "The medications are too expensive"	Explore if there are options to obtain free/ reduced-cost medications. Offer support to enroll in health insurance (if applicable).
Patient says: "I forgot about my appointment"	Suggest that, in the future, the patient set a calendar reminder or inquire about a support person who can remind them about their appointments.
Patient says: "I went to a local healer/ tried a natural treatment"	Inform the patient they can continue to see a local healer/ take natural treatment but should also keep taking their hypertension medications at the same time to prevent heart attacks and strokes.
Patient says: "I have enough medicine with me still"	Acknowledge that the patient has extra medication to take and thank them for taking their medication. Remind them that, even if they have extra pills, it is still important to come for their follow-up appointment to check their blood pressure and see if their medication is working.
Patient says: "I am busy or traveling"	Tell the patient they can visit a different health facility in the areas where they are traveling. The patient can tell the facility they need medical follow-up for high blood pressure and the medication they take. Remind the patient it is important to visit their usual facility for follow-up as soon as they return/ are available.
Patient says: "I am too sick"	Tell the patient they need to seek medical care for the sickness and while they are doing this, they can also have their blood pressure checked. Ask them to please get medical care as soon as possible.