People who “DNA” hospital appointments are usually discharged back to their referring GP. At Whipps, the paediatric consultant in charge of the clinic reviews the notes and GP letter and decides, based on clinical information and known safeguarding concerns, whether the family should be offered another appointment. It is always tricky because it is never the child’s fault that they “Did Not Attend”. Or should we term it “Was Not Brought”? See below from Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board:

Rethinking ‘did not attend’

Any WNB (Was Not Brought) child should have their notes reviewed by the lead clinician and then a decision needs to be made about whether a referral is required for children’s social care for either protection or help and support prior to them being discharged from a service. In addition, inform the person who referred them to your clinic in the first place as well as the GP.

Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board has produced a short video animation to encourage practitioners to identify children as ‘Was Not Brought’ as opposed to ‘Did Not Attend’ (DNA) when referring to them not being presented at medical appointments. The NSPCC thematic briefing on learning from case reviews for the health sector finds that the DNA category does not recognise the real issue which is children not being taken to appointments, a potential indicator of neglect.

Further information: Rethinking ‘Did not attend’ (YouTube)