**Waiting and Appointment Times [QSI Ref: XR-304]**

**Descriptor:**

Waiting time of patients prior to appointment.

**Background:**

Patients find waiting for an examination distressing. Unnecessary waiting reduces departmental efficiency and increases departmental congestion.

## The Cycle

**The standard:**

A locally agreed standard that 90% of patients should be called into the examination room within 10 minutes of their allocated appointment time.

**Target:**

90%

## Assess local practice

**Indicators:**

Percentage of patients who are called into the examination room within 10 minutes of their appointment time.

**Data items to be collected:**

For each patient record on a short proforma:

• The appointment time allocated

• The actual time of the examination

• The identifiable reason for any delay

**Suggested number:**

All for 1 week period.

**Suggestions for change if target not met:**

• If waiting times are too long, then the allocation of the number of appointments in any one session should be reviewed. This may involve reorganisation of staff working hours

• Avoid allocating multiple patients to the same appointment time

• Review arrangements for patients changing their clothes prior to examination

• Recruit Imaging Support Workers

**Resources:**

• Prospective data recording

• Reception clerks to fill in the proforma

• Radiographer: 2 hours for recording of information

No other expense necessary, although a time/date stamp might be helpful in those departments without an electronic facility for recording booking in time.

**References:**

1. The Audit Commission. Improving your Image. How to Manage Radiology Services More Effectively. London: Audit Commission, 1995.
2. Patient’s Charter (1995). London: National Charter Standards, Department of Health, Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London SW1A 2NS.

**Submitted by:**

Taken from Clinical Audit in Radiology 100+ recipes RCR 1996, updated by CRAC 2012, updated by P Mehrotra 2017

**Published Date:**

Monday 7 January 2008

**Last Reviewed:**

Wednesday 20 January 2021