

SMS & Call *Recall Scripts*

Sample SMS, phone, and letter scripts for recalling and reminding refugee-background patients. Designed to be warm, low-pressure, and easy to act on.

This sheet provides sample recall and reminder scripts for SMS, phone call, and letter, designed for use with patients from refugee backgrounds. The wording prioritises respect, clarity, and a low-pressure tone. Adapt to your practice voice and patient population.

Principles for good recall communication

Keep it simple <i>plain language</i>	Short sentences. No medical jargon. Avoid acronyms. If using English, write at a Year 6 reading level. Translate where possible.
Be warm, not urgent <i>avoid pressure</i>	"We'd like to see you for..." reads better than "You must..." or "URGENT". Urgent framing can frighten patients who have prior experience of authoritarian systems.
Name the practice <i>build trust</i>	Include the practice name and a recognisable staff first name where possible. Unsigned messages from unknown numbers are often ignored.
Give an easy next step <i>low effort response</i>	One action. Reply YES. Call this number. Walk in between 9 and 4. Multiple options create decision fatigue.
Plan interpreter support <i>before sending</i>	If the patient needs an interpreter, factor that into the script. "We will arrange an interpreter when you come in" reduces a barrier to response.

TIP

Test new wording on a small batch (10 patients) before rolling out widely. Compare response rates against the previous script. Small changes in tone can produce meaningful differences in engagement.

Sample SMS scripts

GENERAL REMINDER · UPCOMING HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Hi [first name], it's [staff name] from [practice]. We'd like to see you for your health check. Please call us on [phone] to book a time. We can arrange an interpreter. Reply STOP to opt out.

RECALL · OVERDUE FOLLOW-UP AFTER ASSESSMENT

Hi [first name], this is [practice]. [GP first name] would like to see you again to check on you. Please reply YES and we will call you to book a time, or call us on [phone]. We can have an interpreter ready.

RECALL · MISSED APPOINTMENT

Hi [first name], we missed seeing you today at [practice]. No problem, things come up. If you would like to book another time please call [phone] or reply REBOOK. We can arrange an interpreter.

REMINDER · INTERPRETER-SUPPORTED APPOINTMENT BOOKED

Hi [first name], a reminder you have an appointment with [practice] on [date] at [time]. An interpreter will be there. Please come 10 minutes early. Address: [address]. Call [phone] if you need to change the time.

Sample phone scripts

FIRST CONTACT PHONE CALL

If patient answers: "Hi, is that [name]? My name is [staff name], I'm calling from [practice]. Is this a good time to talk for a few minutes?"

If yes: "Great. I'm calling because we'd like to invite you in to see [GP first name] for a health check. Have you been to our practice before? ... We can arrange an interpreter — what language would you prefer?"

If no/busy: "No problem at all. When would be a better time to call back? Or would you prefer we send you a text message with the details?"

FOLLOW-UP AFTER MISSED APPOINTMENT

Opening: "Hi [name], it's [staff name] from [practice]. We had you booked in this morning. Is everything OK?"

Listen first. Do not lead with explanation or rebooking. Many practical reasons (transport, work, childcare, illness) may explain non-attendance. Some are signals of broader issues.

If they want to rebook: "When would suit you better? We can find a time that works. Will you need an interpreter again?"

Sample letter

For patients who don't have a mobile or where text and phone have not worked, a printed letter can still reach. Keep it short, warm, and on one page. Translate where possible.

Dear [name],

We're writing from [practice]. We'd like to invite you in to see one of our doctors for a health check, which is free for you.

We can arrange an interpreter to be there. Please let us know what language you would prefer.

To book, please call [phone] or come in person between 9 am and 4 pm any weekday. Our address is [address].

If you're not able to come in, please let us know — we won't keep writing if you don't want us to.

Kind regards,

[Staff name]

[Practice name]

Blank script worksheet

ADAPT FOR YOUR PRACTICE

PRACTICE NAME AND CONTACT

SMS SCRIPT · PURPOSE:

PHONE SCRIPT · PURPOSE:

LETTER · PURPOSE:

A NOTE ON THE TONE OF VOICE

The tone of recall messages is often more important than the content. Patients who have experienced detention, displacement, or government distrust read messages carefully for tone. Warm, named, specific, and unhurried wording almost always outperforms generic or compliance-framed wording.

NEXT STEP

Once the practice has agreed which scripts to use, document them in the standard procedure for recalls so all staff use a consistent voice. Track response rates against the scripts using **Appendix 09 (Monthly Snapshot Template)**.