

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201102328, A Medical Practice in the Tayside NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment; diagnosis  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained to the Ombudsman about the length of time that her late mother (Mrs A) had been prescribed medication (Mogadon/Nitrazepam). Ms C had read literature which mentioned that Nitrazepam should not be prescribed for more than nine months. She wondered whether the medication could have been the cause of Mrs A's obsessional episodes and led on to her suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Our investigation found that medical opinion had changed over the years and that currently it would not be best practice to prescribe Nitrazepam for a prolonged period. However, withdrawal of the medication is quite complex and requires the risks to be balanced against the benefits. In Mrs A's case our medical adviser said that long term prescription of the medication was appropriate.