

SPSO decision report

Case: 201304451, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C took her young daughter (Miss A) to her medical practice as Miss A had a high temperature that would not come down, despite being given paracetamol. Mrs C said her daughter was shivering and was having difficulty catching her breath.

Mrs C said that at the appointment the GP described Miss A's condition as a chest infection and prescribed antibiotics. Miss A was later admitted to hospital suffering from pneumonia (a lung infection). Mrs C said that the GP should have told her that he suspected pneumonia, rather than describing her daughter's condition as a chest infection. She thought that her daughter should have been referred for further tests and investigations at the appointment, rather than being sent home with a prescription for antibiotics. Mrs C also said that the practice had failed to handle her complaint appropriately. She said that, at a meeting, the GP seemed more upset about her complaint than about Miss A's experience, which had left her traumatised with a fear of hospitals and doctors.

We took independent advice from one of our medical advisers. The adviser said that the evidence showed that the GP recorded a diagnosis of suspected pneumonia in his notes, and prescribed antibiotics for treatment at home, in line with national guidelines. He also said that there was no evidence that Miss A had not received an acceptable standard of care.

Our investigation also found that the practice carried out a thorough investigation into Mrs C's complaint. They provided an explanation for the remarks made by the GP at the meeting with Mrs C and where they identified learning points they took action to address them. We found that the practice had responded appropriately to Mrs C's complaint.