

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201402194, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C, an advice worker, had written to her client (Mr A)'s medical practice to seek clarification about whether a request that Mr A made to his GP for a referral had been carried out. She received no response. After two follow-up letters were also ignored and two months had gone by, Ms C complained to us.

The practice told us that they did not consider that entering into correspondence with Ms C would serve any practical purpose as the issues Mr A was concerned about had been dealt with some years previously. We decided, however, that the practice should have explained this to Ms C. We, therefore, upheld her complaint that the practice did not reasonably respond to her correspondence.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- apologise to Ms C and Mr A for the failure to reply to correspondence; and
- review their communication policies to ensure that they clearly advise correspondents when a decision is taken that correspondence will not be responded to, and explain the reasons for that decision.