

SPSO decision report

Case: 201707783, A Medical Practice in the Grampian NHS Board area

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that the practice had failed to provide appropriate care and treatment to her husband (Mr A) when he reported mobility problems following a fall where he was hit by a car door. Mr A had a history of ankylosing spondylitis (a type of arthritis in the spine). Following the fall, a nurse practitioner made a home visit and, after speaking to a GP, a diagnosis of a dead leg syndrome was made. Mr A continued to deteriorate and a further call was made to the practice the following day. Mr A was then admitted to hospital where he was diagnosed as having two unstable fractured vertebrae (bones in the spinal column).

We took independent advice from a GP adviser and from a nursing adviser. We found that, based on the symptoms first reported by Mr A, there was no indication of a serious illness and that he did not require a hospital admission that first day. We found that it was appropriate that it was only when his condition deteriorated and he reported some numbness that it was deemed necessary to contact the hospital specialists and arrange for Mr A to be admitted to hospital. We did not uphold the complaint.