

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201804326, Scottish Ambulance Service  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained about the treatment she received from the ambulance service. Mrs C said that she told the paramedic she had chest pains and had vomited a lot of blood. She said the paramedic refused to carry out a proper assessment and returned to their vehicle. Mrs C dialled 999 again and the paramedic returned to the house. The paramedic spoke to Mrs C's GP and it was arranged that she should make an appointment at the practice to discuss her health problems. Mrs C made a further call to the ambulance service 12 hours later and was then taken to hospital.

We took independent advice from a consultant in emergency medicine. We found that there was a difference in recall between the paramedic and Mrs C about the amount of blood she had lost whilst vomiting. The paramedic had recorded that Mrs C had only coughed up a small streak of blood. If the paramedic's recall was the more accurate, then there was no requirement to take her to hospital. However, had she vomited a lot of blood as had described in the later call for assistance then a transfer to hospital was appropriate. While there was some contact between the paramedic and Mrs C's GP, the GP's phone note did not mention any blood loss.

On balance, we decided that in view of the record of little blood loss and the facts that the paramedic had made contact with the GP practice, Mrs C did not seek additional medical assistance for a period of 12 hours; and that her symptoms at that time were vastly different from before, that the actions of the paramedic were reasonable. We did not uphold the complaint.