

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201907297, Borders NHS Board  
**Sector:** Health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the treatment the board provided to their spouse (A). After falling unwell, C had contacted NHS 24 on A's behalf as they were concerned that A's symptoms may have been due to a cardiac (heart and its blood vessels) issue. A then spoke to a medical professional from NHS 24 who signposted them towards Borders Emergency Care Service (BECS), an out-of-hours service, which they attended.

When A attended BECS, they were examined by a trainee advance nurse practitioner (ANP). After examining A and taking a history from them, the trainee ANP's view was that A's symptoms were due to a muscular strain rather than being cardiac in nature. A was discharged on this basis but died four days later as a result of coronary artery atheroma (fatty deposits that build up on the walls of arteries around the heart). C complained that A's death was preventable and that they were not examined appropriately when they attended BECS.

We took independent advice from a nurse. We found that the examination of A, and the trainee ANP's decision-making, were reasonable given the information provided to them. In addition to this, it was appropriate for a trainee ANP to examine A and reach conclusions on their treatment. We concluded that A received appropriate treatment when they attended BECS. Therefore, we did not uphold this complaint.