

SPSO decision report

Case: 201910988, A Medical Practice in the Highland NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained on behalf of their parent (A) about the care and treatment A received from their GP practice; in particular, that there was a delay in referring A for further investigations which led to a delay in A being diagnosed with colon cancer.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that all appropriate investigative tests were carried out at A's first attendance at the practice. On their second attendance, we found that the care and treatment A received was reasonable and that tests were undertaken with appropriate follow-up to a consultant gastroenterologist (a physician who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the stomach and intestines) who A chose to see at a private hospital. Following receipt of the consultant gastroenterologist's report, we considered that there was no unreasonable delay by the practice in making an urgent referral to the gastroenterology out-patient clinic at an NHS hospital. We considered that a rectal examination should have been performed when A attended the practice, however, this was a minor criticism and had not impacted on A's future treatment. We noted that this had been addressed in the Significant Event Analysis (SEA) carried out by the practice.

On balance, we considered that the practice provided A with reasonable care and treatment. Therefore, we did not uphold the complaint.