

SPSO decision report

Case: 202001802, A Medical Practice in the Fife NHS Board Area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained to the practice about a consultation they had. They said that they reported symptoms of severe pain and swelling of the abdomen and that they were grey in colour and had difficulty standing up. C said the practice prescribed them with laxatives (medication to help increase bowel movements). C continued to deteriorate and days later was admitted to hospital as an emergency, where it was found they had perforated diverticular (diverticula are small bulges or pockets that can develop in the lining of the intestine as you get older) disease. C said they had to undergo emergency surgery and were an inpatient for a month. C felt that the practice should have diagnosed their serious condition and arranged an urgent hospital admission.

We took independent advice from a medical practitioner. We found that the GP involved had carried out an appropriate examination based on C's presenting symptoms and that a diagnosis of constipation was reasonable. There was no clinical indication that C's health was going to suddenly deteriorate with severe diverticular disease and that they would require a hospital admission. We did not uphold the complaint.