

SPSO decision report



Case: 202002676, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained that their late parent (A) called the practice and was given a prescription without being seen in person. C also complained that an appointment or home visit wasn't arranged when C called three days later and reported that A's condition had worsened.

We obtained independent advice from a general practitioner adviser. We found that the actions taken by the practice at the time of the initial call were reasonable and considered it reasonable for A not to have been seen in person at that time. We also considered that reasonable action was taken when C called three days later, based on what was documented in the records. However, it was acknowledged that there were differing accounts of what had been discussed, and that the symptoms C said they communicated would reasonably have prompted A to be seen in person. Based on the evidence available and the advice obtained, which we accepted, we concluded that A received reasonable medical care and we did not uphold this complaint.

However, we noted that the level of documentation could have been improved. This includes recording when safety netting advice is given (when patients are advised to return if their symptoms don't improve, advice which the practice said was given to A during the first call but was not documented); reasons why a patient is not spoken to directly (as was the case when C called); and reasons to see or not to see a patient in person, particularly for a repeat caller. We fed this back to the practice for their reflection and learning, along with feedback on their handling of the complaint.