

SPSO decision report



Case: 202301408, A Medical Practice in the NHS Forth Valley Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided to their parent (A). A had presented with foot pain and initially had been thought to have Plantar Fasciitis (an inflammation of the tissue along the bottom of the foot). A later returned to the practice with an infected toe, which failed to respond to antibiotics. A was referred to vascular medicine and later underwent surgery in hospital, but died a few months later. C believed that A should have been referred to vascular medicine sooner, as A was at high risk and displayed symptoms of vascular disease. C was also unhappy with the language used in the complaint response that the family received.

We took independent advice from a general practitioner. We found that A was given a reasonable standard of treatment and care. There was no evidence that symptoms of vascular disease were dismissed or overlooked. We did not uphold this aspect of the complaint. In relation to the language used in the complaint response, we found that the complaint response was inappropriately informal and contained some errors, which added to the family's distress. We upheld this aspect of the complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for the inappropriate language and incorrect dates in the complaint response. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [HYPERLINK "http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets" www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets) .

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.