

SPSO decision report



Case: 202307220, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained that the practice unreasonably refused to offer a face-to-face appointment to their child (A) who is immunosuppressed with asthma and had a cough for over three weeks.

The practice advised that if A had shown symptoms of shortness of breath or wheezing, a face-to-face appointment would have been arranged. C did not identify these symptoms and so C was advised to double the dose of A's inhaler and get in contact if A worsened. It was also noted that A had an appointment with paediatrics later that day.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that it was not reasonable to rely on a parent / carer to determine whether a child is wheezing or short of breath. A was immunosuppressed and at higher risk of infection. While it is acknowledged that A had a paediatrics appointment later that day, there is no record that this rationale for declining to see A was a factor in their decision making at the time. As such, we upheld C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- The clinicians involved should reflect on the findings of this case and the relevant guidelines.

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.