

Case: 201102146, A Medical Practice in the Orkney NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that her GP practice failed to diagnose that her daughter (Miss A) had hip dysplasia (HD) as a baby. She thought that the GP who had carried out Miss A's hip examination at 6/8 weeks had not done so correctly. Mrs C said that there was a lack of detailed notes as to the precise procedures that the GP said she carried out during this examination, and that the records were not complete.

Mrs C felt that her daughter's condition should have been noticed sooner. She acknowledged that even when checks are carried out properly, the condition can be missed. However, she was also concerned that no further checks were routinely offered. (Miss A's older sister had had a further developmental check when aged between 6/9 months.) Mrs C said that because of this, Miss A had to undergo extensive surgery and rehabilitation when she was two years and nine months old. In her view Miss A's suffering could have been significantly reduced if her HD had been diagnosed earlier.

After taking advice from one of our medical advisers, we did not uphold Mrs C's complaint. Our adviser noted that there were two different accounts of what may have happened at Miss A's assessment and said that the entries in the records were of a normal standard for GP records in Scotland. He also said that the diagnosis of HD can be missed, even when the tests are performed correctly by experienced doctors. The adviser also noted that the timing of developmental assessment checks has changed from when Miss A's sister was assessed.

Based on the evidence found during our investigation, we could not support Mrs C's view that the practice did not reasonably carry out the six to eight week examination on Miss A or make an appropriate record of that examination.