

SPSO decision report

Case: 201304152, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment given to her late mother (Mrs A) when she attended an emergency appointment at a GP practice. She said that the doctor concerned did not take proper account of Mrs A's recent medical history, nor did she examine her legs but merely accepted Mrs A's home GP's diagnosis of phlebitis (inflammation of the vein). Mrs C said that this was a missed opportunity to consider a diagnosis of deep vein thrombosis (a blood clot in a vein). Shortly afterwards, Mrs A died of a bilateral pulmonary embolism (a clot in the blood vessel that transports blood from the heart to the lungs).

The complaint was investigated and all the relevant information was taken into account including the complaints correspondence and Mrs A's relevant clinical records. We also took independent advice from our GP adviser on Mrs A's care and treatment. We found that Mrs A had been appropriately examined and that the symptoms and examination had led to the GP making a reasonable diagnosis of phlebitis. All of this was clearly noted in Mrs A's records. We noted that the practice had since carried out a significant event analysis and looked again at their protocol for assessing leg pain.