

SPSO decision report

Case: 201402012, Shetland NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment Mr A was given by his medical practice in the weeks and days prior to his death.

We took independent advice from one of our advisers who is a GP. We found that Mr A, who had a history of pulmonary disease, was seen by a GP at home after complaining of nausea and dyspepsia and of being giddy for three days. We found his treatment to be appropriate. A month later, Mr A attended the practice again complaining of having had nausea and stomach pain for four days. He was examined appropriately and prescribed paracetamol with a plan to see him in five days. However, before this, the practice received a call to see Mr A at home as he had been vomiting. It was planned to visit him after the regular surgery but within a short time another call was made to the practice because Mr A was still vomiting and he had pains in his upper abdomen. A GP attended at Mr A's home and decided that he should be admitted to hospital and he returned to the practice to make the necessary arrangements for Mr A's transfer to hospital. An ambulance attended shortly afterwards but Mr A died before he could be transferred to hospital. Our investigation confirmed that none of this could have been predicted and that, despite Mr A's sudden death, he had been treated reasonably and appropriately, so we did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.