

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201508204, A Medical Practice in the Western Isles NHS Board area

**Sector:** health

**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis

**Outcome:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C has a diagnosed personality disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He complained that the practice had refused to come to his home for a house call in relation to physical symptoms he was experiencing including a cough. When the practice initially declined the house call request, Mr C said that his PTSD had rendered him housebound. He later asked for a mental health referral. The practice advised that they needed to see him at a consultation at the surgery before this could be made and Mr C also complained about this decision. In addition, Mr C complained that his complaint to the practice had not been handled properly.

After taking independent advice from a GP, we did not uphold either of Mr C's complaints about his care. We found that Mr C had been seen recently at the practice and that it was reasonable to ask him to attend for an assessment of his physical symptoms. The GP adviser also considered that it was reasonable to require a face-to-face consultation before making a mental health referral. We also took independent advice from a mental health adviser. The mental health adviser said that the practice's approach was reasonable but highlighted the fluctuating symptoms of PTSD and considered that their approach may need to change in future. These comments were drawn to the practice's attention.

However, we found no evidence that Mr C had been provided with information about the Patient Advice and Support Service and the final response to Mr C's complaint did not include information on how to progress his concerns if he remained dissatisfied. We upheld this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- review their complaints handling procedure to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the Scottish Government's 'Can I help you?' guidance.