

SPSO decision report

Case: 201601387, A Medical Practice in the Fife NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late mother (Mrs A) by the medical practice. In particular, she complained that the practice delayed taking action which diagnosed Mrs A was suffering from pancreatic cancer. We took independent GP advice and found that the practice had acted promptly in referring Mrs A for specialist intervention and that there were no delays in sending the referrals. The medical records detailed that Mrs A was referred to hospital twice under the two-week cancer pathway. We did not uphold the complaint.

Ms C also raised concerns that the practice had failed to investigate Mrs A's abnormal liver function results taken in 2014. The advice we received was that the test results had not shown any deterioration until September 2015 and at that time the practice had acted reasonably in making an urgent referral to hospital. In view of the advice that the practice's response was reasonable, we did not uphold the complaint.

Ms C was also concerned that the practice had failed to take appropriate action on Mrs A's reported weight loss. The clinical records demonstrated that Mrs A had been referred for dietary advice and attended a dietician clinic, and the advice we received was that the referral had been made at an early stage. We were satisfied, based on the medical records and independent advice we received, that the practice responded appropriately to Mrs A's reported weight loss and we did not uphold the complaint.

Finally, Ms C complained that the practice failed to ensure appropriate palliative care was put in place for Mrs A at home. The advice we received was that, based on the medical records, the practice had not delayed in referring Mrs A to palliative care services and that the practice offered reasonable care. We did not uphold the complaint.