

SPSO decision report

Case: 201604614, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained to us that when he took his son (child A) to the emergency out-of-hours service, he was not satisfied with the treatment given for child A's swollen eye and temple by the attending GP. The GP diagnosed child A was suffering from a chest infection.

Child A subsequently underwent neurosurgery to remove an abscess (a swollen area within the body tissue, containing an accumulation of pus) from the eye socket and was admitted for over six weeks.

We took independent GP advice and concluded that the GP had provided a reasonable level of care. The GP had noted a history of upper respiratory symptoms for two days (suggestive of viral/cold symptoms) and that both parents had similar symptoms. The GP examined child A's chest, breathing rate and temperature. The GP found that child A was likely to have a chest infection. Child A was given treatment and the family was told to return should they have further concerns. We found that this was a reasonable management plan.

The adviser noted that swollen/puffy eyelids can be common in children with viral illness due to them rubbing their eyes. If there was no evidence of a pus collection, then it was reasonable for the GP to adopt a 'watch and wait' management plan. We found that as the symptoms described could be consistent with a viral illness, it was not unreasonable that the GP did not diagnose the abscess during the visit. We therefore did not uphold Mr C's complaint.