

SPSO decision report

Case: 201605105, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire 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 mother (Mrs A) by her GP practice. A GP visited Mrs A's home and following an examination, the GP considered that Mrs A had an upper respiratory tract infection. Her condition did not improve following the GP's visit and her family took her to hospital. Further examinations in hospital identified that Mrs A had pneumonia, and she died a number of days following admission.

Ms C raised a number of concerns about the home visit carried out by the GP, and felt that an x-ray should have been arranged and antibiotics prescribed. We took independent GP advice and found that the GP's assessment was reasonable. We noted that the GP had documented a detailed history and examination of Mrs A, and that their observations were consistent with a viral infection such that antibiotics were not necessary at that time. The adviser also said that there was no clinical indication for a chest x-ray as Mrs A's symptoms and signs were not consistent with a likely diagnosis of pneumonia. The adviser noted that the GP had also provided advice on what to do if Mrs A's condition became worse. Overall, we found that the GP had provided reasonable care and treatment. We did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Ms C also expressed concern that the GP failed to arrange hospital admission given Mrs A's symptoms. While we noted that Mrs A was subsequently admitted to hospital where she was diagnosed with pneumonia, the adviser did not consider that Mrs A's recorded symptoms at the time of the GP visit were consistent with pneumonia, and did not consider that there was an indication that Mrs A needed to be admitted to hospital at this time. We did not uphold this complaint.