

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201706920, A Medical Practice in the Fife NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained to us that the practice had failed to appropriately monitor her for any side effects of taking nitrofurantoin medication (antibiotic to treat urinary tract infections) for a number of years. She subsequently went on to develop pulmonary fibrosis (lung disease) and liver disease and she felt that these conditions were a direct result of the practice's failure to monitor her medication.

We took independent advice from a GP adviser and concluded that the practice had failed to appropriately monitor Mrs C's liver function and respiratory status over a number of years. The British National Formulary, which is the gold standard reference and guidance regarding medicines, has over the years highlighted advice and more recently issued safety alerts that patients on long term nitrofurantoin medication should be regularly monitored for liver function and respiratory function, although it does not state the frequency. In addition, Mrs C was exhibiting symptoms which are recognised complications of nitrofurantoin medication. We upheld the complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mrs C for the failure to monitor her medication. The apology should comply with the SPSO guidelines on making an apology, available at: [www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance](http://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance).

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.