

SPSO decision report

Case: 201800738, Forth Valley NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the practice's handling of a phone call made by her late son (Mr A) who had hurt his back. Mr A spoke with a triage nurse, who offered him an appointment with an Extended Scope Practitioner (ESP - a physiotherapist who can undertake extra duties such as ordering investigations or making referrals), which Mr A declined. The triage nurse advised Mr A to take regular paracetamol and ibuprofen, and to seek further assistance if his condition worsened. His request for stronger pain killers and other medication was declined. Mrs C considered that Mr A should have been seen by a GP and complained that Mr A didn't get the help he needed.

We took independent advice from a GP and a nurse. We found that the offer of an appointment with the ESP was reasonable for the assessment of back pain, and that it would have allowed for onward referral to a GP if deemed necessary. We also found that the triage nurse carried out a reasonable assessment and recorded no information that indicated the need for a GP assessment. Therefore, we did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.