

SPSO decision report

Case: 202109469, A Medical Practice in the Tayside NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained that they did not receive appropriate care and treatment from their GP practice in relation to the diagnosis and treatment of menopause symptoms.

C felt the practice did not take their menopause symptoms seriously and that GPs were not up to date with current guidance when C was offered antidepressants in response to menopause symptoms. As such, C complained that the practice failed to recognise and appropriately treat the symptoms of menopause, leading to a delay in diagnosis and treatment. The practice considered that the care and treatment provided to C had been reasonable.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that there had been a number of missed opportunities to diagnose menopause, that consideration had not been given to the relevant NICE Guideline NG23 (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guideline on Menopause: Diagnosis and Management), and that GPs had failed to consider alternative hormone replacement treatment (HRT) preparations during a period of national shortage. This led to a delay in the diagnosis and treatment of C's menopause. As such, we upheld C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for the delay in diagnosis and treatment of their menopause symptoms. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Where patients report symptoms of menopause, they should be appropriately assessed in accordance with relevant national guidelines.

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.