

SPSO decision report



Case: 202207985, A Medical Practice in the Forth Valley NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment that they received over a series of interactions with the practice. C believed that their symptoms had not been properly investigated. C subsequently suffered a stroke and felt that the outcome for them could have been better if they had been listened to when they contacted the practice. C also felt that the practice's complaint handling had been unreasonable, failing to provide C with information that they were entitled to and incorrectly directing them to the local NHS Board as part of the complaints process.

We took independent advice from a GP adviser. We found that some of the assessments of C did fall below a reasonable standard, although it was not possible to conclude that the stroke could have been predicted or prevented. Therefore, we upheld and did not uphold aspects of these complaints around the assessment of C's symptoms over different periods. We also found that the handling of C's complaint fell below a reasonable standard. We upheld this aspect of the complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for the failings identified. 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:

- Patients should receive appropriate treatment in relation to their presenting symptoms and potential causes considered as appropriate.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- The practice should provide clear information about their complaints process.

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.