

SPSO decision report



Case: 202408315, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided to their late parent (A) by a GP Practice. Following a road traffic accident, A was found to be in atrial fibrillation (a type of heart rhythm where the heartbeat is not steady). The hospital asked the GP to review A for anticoagulation (medication to prevent blood clots from forming or growing) once their injuries had resolved. Several weeks later A had an appointment at the practice and was referred for a 24-hour ECG (a medical test that records the heart's activity over a 24-hour period). Before the results could be assessed by the practice, A suffered a stroke. C complained that the practice unreasonably delayed in initiating anticoagulant therapy.

We took independent advice from a GP. Following our initial enquiries, the practice provided additional explanation regarding the complexity of the decision making as to whether to prescribe anticoagulation to A, and the reasoning behind their decision to wait for the results of the 24-hour ECG. Following this additional explanation, we considered that the practice's position and treatment plan was reasonable. We therefore did not uphold the complaint. However, we noted that not everything the practice had said in their further explanation was documented in the medical records and we provided feedback to the practice on this point.