

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201201474, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained about the care and treatment that her late brother (Mr A) received from a medical practice. She was very unhappy with the GP's long-term use of antibiotics in treating Mr A's skin problems. Mr A found it very difficult to leave home, and Ms C said that for almost eighteen months, the GP prescribed Mr A a large amount of antibiotics, mainly during home visits or phone consultations. Mr A had later died from cancer of the pancreas (which was unrelated to this complaint).

We took independent advice from one of our medical advisers, and reviewed Mr A's medical records, as well as the documentation provided by Ms C. While we acknowledged that the GP had considerable difficulties in managing Mr A's condition, our adviser said that it was clear that an inappropriate amount of antibiotics was prescribed over a long period, and that Mr A's condition might have been managed better by involving district nurses. We accepted this advice, upheld the complaint and made two recommendations.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- conduct a significant events review; and
- apologise to Ms C for the failures identified.