

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201201921, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C had been prescribed nitrofurantoin (an antibiotic drug used to treat bacterial infection) for a number of years for a recurring infection. He was then diagnosed with pulmonary fibrosis (a rare condition causing scarring of the lungs), which is a known side effect of nitrofurantoin and the drug was stopped. He complained that his former medical practice failed to review his long-term prescriptions of nitrofurantoin appropriately.

The British National Formulary (BNF) provides national guidance for healthcare professionals about the prescribing of medicines. The BNF entry for nitrofurantoin says that lung and liver function should be monitored where someone had been prescribed this long-term. In addition, the General Medical Council (GMC) provide prescribing guidance, which says doctors should ensure that they are familiar with the BNF guidance for medicines they prescribe.

We considered that the practice should have asked Mr C if he was having any problems with his breathing when they were reviewing his medication and that they should have recorded his response to this in the medical records. As there was no evidence in Mr C's medical records that they had done so, we upheld his complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- apologise to Mr C for failing to record whether they had asked if he was having any problems with his breathing when they reviewed his medication.