

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202175, A Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that reception staff at the medical practice failed to allow her granddaughter, who was taken by her mother and father to the surgery, to see a doctor. The family had attended in person because they could not get through on the phone and they were concerned about their daughter's deteriorating health. When they could not see a doctor, they took their daughter to hospital where she was diagnosed with meningococcal meningitis. Mrs C also complained about the way the practice dealt with her complaint.

We found that the reception staff had failed to deal with this incident appropriately. We were of the view that they should have sought advice from the clinical team who would then, in all probability, have arranged emergency transport to hospital. We also agreed that they did not handle the complaint well. As a result of this, we upheld Mrs C's complaints. However, we did note that when this matter came to the attention of clinical staff, the practice had taken it very seriously. They carried out a significant event analysis and introduced procedural changes and staff training to try and minimise the likelihood of a similar situation arising in the future. On the basis of their actions, and their apology to Mrs C's family, we did not make any further recommendations in this case.