

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201204151, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** communication, staff attitude, dignity, confidentiality  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Miss C submitted a repeat prescription request to the medical practice on behalf of her mother. When she went to the pharmacy to collect the prescription over the next few days, it was not available. It was not until several weeks later, when she called about another matter, that she found out the prescription had been lying at the practice awaiting collection. Miss C complained that the practice did not tell her that the prescription was waiting to be picked up, and felt they should have been responsible for dropping it off at the pharmacy.

During our investigation we took independent advice from one of our medical advisers. The adviser said that responsibility for collecting prescriptions and taking them to a pharmacy lies with the patient or their carer. He noted that pharmacists often collect prescriptions from GP surgeries, but that this is a goodwill service and they are not obliged to do so. We considered that it would have been reasonable for Miss C to have asked what had happened to the prescription. We also noted that when the complaint reached us, the prescription had still not been collected, although Miss C had been aware for some time that it was waiting to be picked up. In the circumstances, we did not uphold the complaint.