

SPSO decision report

Case: 201303807, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area

Sector: health

Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C's aunt (Ms A) had multiple health issues and lived in a nursing home. Ms C complained that on one occasion when Ms A became distressed, a GP who was in the nursing home at the time decided not to examine her, despite the symptoms that were reported. Ms C thought it inappropriate that the GP decided there were no grounds to examine Ms A, without having seen her.

The medical practice said that the GP was there to see a number of patients for whom consultations had been pre-arranged. He had told staff to contact the practice so that another GP could make an arranged home visit to Ms A. The practice told us that when staff told the GP of the specific circumstances, he decided that there was no requirement for a consultation at that time as there were no medical issues that needed to be addressed. Having taken independent advice from one of our medical advisers, we found that the GP had made a reasonable decision that there was no need for an immediate medical assessment. Although it was clear that Ms A had been distressed, this appeared to have been triggered by an environmental, rather than a medical, issue.