

SPSO decision report

Case: 201306093, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C told us that during a consultation on another matter she had mentioned to her GP that she had a lump on her thigh. She said the GP dismissed the lump as being of no consequence. She mentioned the lump again during a consultation three years later, after it began to grow. She was referred to hospital and was later diagnosed with a malignant tumour. Mrs C said she thought the GP was unreasonably dismissive of the concerns she had raised at the earlier consultation.

We found that there was no written record of the earlier discussion between Mrs C and her GP. The GP had no recollection of the consultation, but the practice had accepted Mrs C's account of the discussion. They said that the lump would not have been referred unless it was bigger than five centimetres, was deep or was increasing in size. They said that Mrs C's own account of the lump was that it was very small and had not changed during the three year period between consultations.

We concluded that the original decision not to refer Mrs C was reasonable and consistent with the guidance relating to the referral of lumps, and did not uphold Mrs C's complaint. Although it would have been best practice for the GP to record that discussion, in the circumstances we did not consider it unreasonable that they did not.