

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201402980, A Medical Practice in the Grampian NHS Board area

**Sector:** health

**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis

**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment her late husband (Mr C) received from the practice in the final months of his life. Mr C died after a period of illness and Mrs C felt he did not get the level of care he required as his health deteriorated. In particular, she raised concerns that her requests for GPs to attend were ignored despite Mr C having been very ill and in a lot of pain. Mrs C was also unhappy that the practice recorded the cause of Mr C's death as dementia, as she considered that he had shown signs of many other illnesses.

We took independent advice from one of our GP advisers. Our adviser considered that the practice provided a reasonable standard of care and treatment to Mr C. She said there was a good level of multi-disciplinary involvement, particularly in the last 24 days of his life when he had multiple visits from a range of clinicians. She also considered that the recorded cause of death was appropriate, advising that Mr C's deterioration was consistent with the decline exhibited by patients with dementia. She acknowledged that Mr C had other illnesses that could potentially have been listed in part 2 of the death certificate. However, she explained that this part should not be used to list all conditions present at death but rather only those felt to have directly contributed to the death. She noted that this was a matter of clinical judgement and considered that the practice acted reasonably, and in line with national guidance, in this instance. We accepted the advice we received and did not uphold these complaints.