

SPSO decision report

Case: 201502051, 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, who is an advocacy worker, complained on behalf of her client (Mrs B). Mrs B said that her mother (Mrs A) was left without proper care and support from her local medical practice. She said that they failed to recognise the seriousness of Mrs A's condition and she died as a consequence.

We took independent advice from a medical adviser who is a GP. We found that Mrs A had very complex medical problems. She had severe artery disease and had already had a leg amputated above the knee. She also had severe heart disease. Mrs A was being cared for in the community. When the practice were alerted to the fact that she had a small necrotic area (a patch of dead tissue) on her leg stump which had been there for three to four weeks, a GP assessed Mrs A at home and decided that she be reviewed urgently. A day later, the practice were advised that the affected area was deteriorating. Contact was attempted with both Mrs A and the warden of her accommodation but this proved impossible as neither answered the phone. A home visit was then arranged for the next day. Meanwhile, Mrs A was taken into hospital where she died a few days later. We did not uphold the complaint as we were satisfied that the practice had taken all reasonable action in the circumstances.