

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201503079, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** communication / staff attitude / dignity / confidentiality  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C contacted the practice about appointments for her sons. She was unhappy with the way in which the practice handled her contact. She felt that the practice manager had breached confidentiality by referring to a previous conversation she had had with a GP at the practice about one son when she was calling about her other son. She also felt that the practice had not acted correctly in relation to allegations that she was abusive and that she was told to go elsewhere. She was also unhappy that they had noted on her medical records that she was more interested in her sons' rights than taking them to review appointments.

Following consideration of Mrs C's complaint to the practice and to us, the practice's response to her complaints as well as the information the practice provided to us following our enquiry (which included records of the conversations Mrs C had had with the practice), we did not uphold Mrs C's complaints. We felt it was reasonable for the practice manager to refer to previous conversations between Mrs C and the practice in so far as it related to her own actions and behaviour, rather than the specific medical conditions of her sons. The notes of the conversations did not indicate that Mrs C was abusive, rather that she was upset and excessively angry. Given the circumstances, we considered that the practice's handling of Mrs C's contact, which was to put a note on her record that any future issues are fed back to the practice manager, was a reasonable way to proactively manage internally any potential issues with future contact. There was no record in the practice's notes of the conversation that Mrs C was told to go elsewhere and the practice and Mrs C had differing recollections of what was said. It was not possible, therefore, for us to determine exactly what was said. Although we understood that Mrs C was unhappy about what was written in the record about not taking her sons to review appointments, we considered that the practice's explanation that this was an accurate reflection of the discussion and beneficial to have recorded for any future contact, was reasonable.