

SPSO decision report

Case: 201505304, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained to us that her daughter (Ms A) had attended the board's out-of-hours GP service with symptoms of a numb tongue, swollen face and a burning sensation down the left side. Mrs C said that the GP who saw her daughter failed to carry out an appropriate examination, dismissed Ms A's concerns and told her to contact her own GP if the symptoms persisted. The following day, Ms A attended hospital and was diagnosed with Bell's palsy (a condition that causes temporary weakness or paralysis of the muscles in one side of the face). Mrs C was dissatisfied with the out-of-hours GP's actions.

We took independent advice from an adviser in general practice medicine and concluded that the out-of-hours GP had carried out an appropriate assessment based on the presenting symptoms and taking note of Ms A's previous medical history. At the time of the examination, there were no signs which indicated the presence of Bell's palsy. Bell's palsy commonly develops suddenly and as such the adviser did not consider that the GP had missed the diagnosis but rather that the symptoms were not present at the time Ms A was examined to allow a diagnosis to be made. We did not uphold the complaint.