SPSO decision report

Case: **201508342, A Medical Practice in the Grampian NHS Board area**
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained to us about the treatment her mother (Mrs A) received from her medical practice. In particular, she was unhappy with the treatment Mrs A received for pain in her left arm and in relation to choking episodes. She also made a number of complaints about the medication prescribed to Mrs A.

We took independent advice from a GP adviser. We found that, in general, the treatment provided to Mrs A by the practice had been of a reasonable standard. However, although Mrs A had angina, she had been prescribed an anti-inflammatory medication by a GP that is contraindicated in (should not be given to) patients with angina. In addition, Mrs A had incorrectly been prescribed a double prescription of heart medication and iron tablets. Although there was no evidence that Mrs A suffered harm as a result of these prescribing errors, in view of these failings we upheld the complaint. The practice had already apologised for this.

Mrs C also complained that a GP had told Mrs A that she had cancer when she attended a consultation at the practice on her own. We found that the specialist clinician who had previously arranged tests for Mrs A should have previously informed her of the diagnosis. It was reasonable for the GP to assume that Mrs A had already been informed of her diagnosis. We did not uphold this aspect of Mrs C's complaint.

Finally, Mrs C complained about the practice's handling of her complaint. We upheld this, as we found that the practice had delayed in responding and had not advised Mrs C that she could contact SPSO.

Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- ensure that all GPs are aware of the contraindications for the anti-inflammatory medication prescribed; and
- take steps to ensure that responses to complaints are issued within a reasonable timeframe and include signposting to SPSO.