

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201508443, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C, an advice agency worker, complained on behalf of the family of Mrs A. Two GPs at the practice had visited Mrs A's home on request and diagnosed that she had a urinary tract infection, for which they prescribed medication. After the GPs left, the family tried to move Mrs A upstairs to her bedroom, but in the process she suffered a leg injury. An ambulance was called and she was admitted to hospital for that injury.

The family complained that Mrs A was not very mobile and that the GPs should have admitted her to hospital, rather than simply leave them on their own to manage an elderly, immobile patient in a home with steep stairs.

We took independent advice on this case from a GP. Our investigation established that the GPs had acted in line with guidance on hospitalisation in the SIGN guideline, 'The Management of Urinary Tract Infection in Adults'. (SIGN is the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network, which is an organisation that develops clinical guidelines for the NHS in Scotland.) In other words, they had appropriately identified that, in her case, Mrs A should be treated at home but that hospitalisation might become appropriate. The GPs had also appropriately arranged urgent referral to a multi-disciplinary team, who would be able to help Mrs A with self-care and mobilisation.

The GPs considered that they had advised the family that Mrs A might need to remain downstairs initially. In the absence of independent evidence, the facts around this could not be established either way. The lead GP felt on reflection that he could have checked more whether the family had understood his advice and information, and said he would check this more in future cases.