

SPSO decision report

Case: 201602796, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about the care and treatment provided to her brother (Mr A) for pain and other symptoms he reported in his legs. Mr A had been attending the practice about these issues. The practice referred him to a community clinic and deep vein thrombosis (DVT) service at the local NHS board during the period covered by this complaint. He was diagnosed with severe critical limb ischemia (obstruction of the arteries that reduces blood flow to the extremities) and later required amputation of his leg above the knee. Ms C was concerned that there was an opportunity to diagnose Mr A's condition earlier and that this could have resulted in a different outcome.

After taking independent medical advice from a general practitioner, we did not uphold Ms C's complaint. The advice we received was that appropriate timely referrals had been made for Mr A and that the practice had reasonably explored potential causes of his symptoms. We found that there could have been more information included in one of the referrals that had been made for Mr A, however, the advice we received was that this did not have any impact on Mr A's case. We made a recommendation in connection with this for learning purposes.

Recommendations

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Referral letters should include information in line with General Medical Council guidance.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.