

SPSO decision report

Case: 201608966, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late relative (Miss A). Miss A attended the GP practice with an abdominal swelling and was urgently referred to the gynaecology department at a hospital. Surgery was subsequently carried out to remove an ovarian cyst. Over the course of the following year, Miss A attended the practice on several occasions with various symptoms and ultimately attended the emergency department at a hospital. After various attendances at hospital, tests identified that Miss A had advanced cancer and she died within a few weeks. Mrs C believed that tests could have been carried out sooner if the practice had not ignored a family history of bowel cancer.

We took independent advice from GP adviser. We found that, prior to final visits to the practice, Miss A had not presented with symptoms that required urgent investigation or referral to a colorectal specialist (a doctor specialising in the colon and the rectum), in accordance with the relevant guidelines. We considered that there was no indication for genetic screening. We also found that it was reasonable of the practice to accept hospital staff's advice that the ovarian cyst that had been removed was non-cancerous and did not require follow-up. In light of these findings, we did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.