

SPSO decision report

Case: 201702591, A Medical Practice in the Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her husband (Mr A) by the practice. Mr A attended the practice feeling unwell, having had a history of heart problems. In the following weeks Mr A was admitted to hospital where he was diagnosed with a condition in his heart. Mr A suffered an injury in the brain as a result of a bleed, and his short term memory has been impacted by this. Mrs C considered that if the heart condition had been diagnosed earlier, then Mr A's eventual outcome may have been different.

We took independent advice from a GP adviser. We found that the symptoms described and noted were not indicative of a particular illness. We also found that the classic symptoms of Mr A's condition were not seen until the day Mr A was admitted to hospital. We found that the GP took reasonable steps to establish the reason for Mr A being unwell and carried out appropriate tests. We also considered that the GP made an appropriate referral to a cardiologist (a doctor who specialises in finding, treating and preventing diseases of the heart and blood vessels). The referral to the cardiologist was not sent as a matter of urgency. The GP surgery acknowledged this error and took steps to ensure that this did not happen again. We found that, even if the referral had been sent urgently, this would not have had an impact on the outcome. We did not uphold the complaint.