

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201704181, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained to us that the practice had failed to provide appropriate treatment to his late wife (Mrs A). Mrs A had been attending a hospital out-patient department for a separate matter and had been advised to make an emergency GP appointment as she was showing symptoms of a cough and breathlessness. Mrs A developed deep vein thrombosis (DVT, blood clot in a large vein) four days after the consultation and later died. Mr C believed that the practice should have referred his wife to hospital at the time of the appointment.

The practice responded that Mrs A was given an emergency appointment following her attendance at the out-patient clinic. However, the reason for the appointment was for anxiety problems and Mrs A only reported symptoms of low mood and that her heart was racing. Mrs A did not report symptoms of having a cough, chest pain, shortness of breath, or pain or swelling in her leg. The practice prescribed anti-depressant medication and diagnosed anxiety problems.

We took independent advice from an adviser in general practice medicine and concluded that, from the entries in Mrs A's medical records, the practice had provided a reasonable level of care. There was no indication that Mrs A had reported symptoms suggestive of DVT and the medication prescribed by the practice was appropriate for symptoms of anxiety and low mood. There was also no indication that a hospital referral was required at that time. We did not uphold the complaint.