

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201704238, A Medical Practice in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C, an advocacy and support worker, complained on behalf of her client (Mr B) who had concerns about the way the medical practice had managed his mother (Mrs A)'s oxazepam medication (for anxiety and to be taken for short periods only). He said that Mrs A had been taking the medication for a number of years and that the practice had recently reduced the medication and, as a result, Mrs A suffered a stroke. She was taken to hospital and died of a further stroke a number of days later. Mr B felt that the stress of the medication reduction caused Mrs A to suffer a stroke.

We took independent advice from an adviser in general practice medicine and found that the practice had managed Mrs A's medication regime in an appropriate manner. Care has to be taken with oxazepam medication as it can cause both psychological and physical addiction. Practices have a responsibility to keep medication under review to ensure that it is still required and if it is not, they must reduce it or stop the medication completely. We found that there was evidence from the records that Mrs A was initially not requesting the medication on a regular basis but recently had made increased requests. This made it necessary to review and reduce the medication to an appropriate level. There was also no evidence that the reduction in medication led to Mrs A suffering a stroke. Therefore, we did not uphold the complaint.