

SPSO decision report



Case: 201704771, A Medical Practice in the Highland NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C made a complaint on behalf of Mrs B about the care and treatment her late husband (Mr A) received at his GP practice. Mr A had a number of health issues including epilepsy for which he had been prescribed medication for many years. Mr A had attended the surgery for worsening upper abdominal pain following a two day history of vomiting. Mr A was admitted to hospital where he died several days later. Pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) was recorded as one of the causes of Mr A's death. Mrs C complained that the practice had failed to provide Mr A with reasonable care and treatment. In particular, that Mr A's GP had failed to recognise that Mr A's epilepsy medication could cause pancreatitis.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that the care and treatment provided to Mr A by the practice was reasonable. Mr A's health concerns were appropriately investigated and blood tests and referrals were made as appropriate and in a timely manner. We also noted that pancreatitis is a very rare side effect of the medication Mr A was taking for his epilepsy. We considered that the care provided to Mr A by the practice was of a reasonable standard and in line with good medical practice. Therefore, we did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.