

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201706213, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about the care and treatment his daughter (Ms A) received from the practice. Ms A contacted the practice about severe abdominal pain and was given advice over the phone. Four days later Ms A was admitted to hospital where she had her appendix and part of her bowel removed. Mr C felt that it was unreasonable that the practice did not examine Ms A in person when she called them and that this failure could have led to a potentially serious situation.

We took independent advice from a medical adviser. We found that the practice failed unreasonably to adequately assess and examine Ms A. Therefore, we upheld Mr C's complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for the failings in assessment and examination. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/leafletsand-guidance](http://www.spsso.org.uk/leafletsand-guidance).

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- The doctor involved should reflect on the complaint and findings in their next appraisal.
- The doctor involved should follow the relevant guidance on assessment and management of abdominal pain in women of childbearing age.