

SPSO decision report

Case: 201800568, 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 to us that the practice had failed to provide appropriate care and treatment to her late daughter (Miss A). Miss A had attended the practice with her partner and had reported symptoms of severe headaches, tiredness and constantly dropping items from her left hand. The GP took Miss A's blood pressure and gave her a vitamin injection. Miss A died at home the following day.

We took independent advice from a GP adviser. We found that the doctor should have arranged further investigations of Miss A's weakness and dropping items with her left hand as this was a new symptom. The doctor should have arranged for an urgent review by a stroke specialist to establish if there were signs of a Transient Ischaemic Attack (a mini stroke) which was a risk factor for subsequent stroke or myocardial infarction (heart attack). However, we found that the doctor had carried out a reasonable assessment and examination which was in line with national guidance. There was no indication at that time that Miss A required an urgent hospital admission. Miss A had a complex medical history and her symptoms of high blood pressure, headache and tiredness were longstanding.

On balance, we took the view that the doctor provided reasonable treatment and we did not uphold the complaint. Whilst we did not uphold the complaint we provided feedback to the doctor that they should review the standard of their record-keeping and refresh their knowledge about the presenting symptoms of a Transient Ischaemic Attack.