

SPSO decision report



Case: 201808254, A Medical Practice in the Highland NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr and Mrs C complained on behalf of their daughter (Ms A) that the care and treatment Ms A received from practice was unreasonable. Mr and Mrs C said that the practice sought to reduce Ms A's prescriptions for morphine and diazepam when she joined as a new patient. Mr and Mrs C further complained that the doctor who saw Ms A did not give adequate reasons for why the medications were being reduced. We took independent advice from a GP. We found that it was reasonable for the practice to seek to reduce Ms A's medications. We also found that the doctor provided a clear explanation to Ms A, and Ms A's clinical records showed that she had received the same explanation on multiple occasions from other medical professionals involved in her care who had sought to reduce her medication doses. Therefore, we did not uphold this complaint.

Mr and Mrs C further complained that Ms A was unreasonably removed from the practice list. We found that it was reasonable for Ms A to be removed from the practice list as the doctor/patient relationship had broken down with all the partners in the practice, and while the relevant legislation states that a warning should be given within 12 months, that a warning does not need to be given if the GP does not feel that it is reasonable or practical to do so, which was the case here. Therefore, we did not uphold this complaint.

Mr and Mrs C also complained that the practice's handling of her complaint was unreasonable. We found that the practice's complaint responses did not adequately address the issues raised and the practice failed to signpost to this office. Therefore, we upheld this aspect of the complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr & Mrs C for the complaint handling failures identified. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/informationleaflets.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.