

## SPSO decision report



**Case:** 201809812, A Medical Practice in the Tayside NHS Board area  
**Sector:** Health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained on behalf of her late uncle (Mr A) about the care and treatment he received from his GP practice. Ms C complained that the practice failed to treat Mr A as an urgent patient, even though he was experiencing symptoms that could have been caused by a stroke.

We took independent medical advice from a GP. We found that when Mr A contacted the practice, he did not provide information that suggested it was an emergency and it was reasonable that the GP arranged to see him later that week. However, the next day, Mr A's wife (Ms B) contacted the practice with concerns about Mr A's condition worsening and she spoke to another GP. Ms B asked for Mr A to be seen earlier but this was refused. We found that during this phone call, the GP failed to carry out an appropriate assessment of Mr A's condition, did not communicate reasonably, and inappropriately failed to see Mr A urgently, even though the symptoms Ms B described could have been caused by a stroke. We upheld Ms C's complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr A's family for the failings identified in the care and treatment he received. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at: [HYPERLINK "http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets" www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets) .

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

- When a patient (or their representative) contacts a GP with concerns, the GP should take an adequate medical history and carry out an appropriate assessment of the patient's condition, in a manner that is in line with the General Medical Council guidance on good medical practice.

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.