

SPSO decision report



Case: 201901036, A Medical Practice in the Forth Valley NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late sister (Miss A). Miss A attended the practice and was prescribed medication for suspected vertigo (a sensation of whirling and loss of balance). The following day she collapsed at home and was admitted to hospital. It was found that she had hypercalcaemia (excessive calcium levels), acute pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) and severe dehydration. Miss A's condition continued to deteriorate and she died. Mrs C raised concerns about the level of medication Miss A was prescribed and queried whether they played a role in her death. Mrs C complained that the practice failed to monitor Miss A's medication regime appropriately, to ensure that she received appropriate follow-up for specialist care and that they failed to carry out an appropriate assessment of her condition the day before she collapsed.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that the practice correctly followed the prescribing instruction received by Miss A's specialist and that the list of medications prescribed were reasonable given her symptoms. We concluded it was not the practice's responsibility to chase up the hospital with regards to follow-up appointments. We also found that an appropriate and thorough examination was carried out and there was no evidence to suggest that Miss A was suffering from pancreatitis the day before she collapsed. We did not uphold Mrs C's complaints.