

SPSO decision report



Case: 201907500, A Medical Practice in the Forth Valley NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C's adult child (A) had anxiety and a functional neurological illness (a condition in which patients experience neurological symptoms such as weakness, movement disorders, sensory symptoms and blackouts). One morning A was found to be anxious and unwell. A's other parent (B) thought that it appeared different to A's previous episodes and called the GP who visited A at home.

The GP believed that A should be admitted to hospital and called 999. An ambulance crew attended the scene. There was some discussion between the GP and the hospital about which department A should be admitted to; the Mental Health Unit or the Clinical Assessment Unit. The ambulance crew transported A to hospital where A was quickly assessed and taken to the Intensive Care Unit. A died later that day.

C complained that the GP had not properly assessed A, they had not taken blood pressure readings or their temperature. C said that the GP assessed A through the prism of mental health and had not properly considered whether there could be another cause to their presentation, which was different from previous ones.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that it was appropriate for the GP to consider A's prior medical history when assessing their condition. We found that the GP correctly identified that assessment at hospital was needed, recognising the seriousness of A's condition.

On the basis of information available to the GP at the time, their assessment and conclusions were reasonable. Therefore, we did not uphold the complaint.