

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 202104070, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** Health  
**Subject:** Clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided to their partner (A). A had been suffering from an extended period of constipation which the District Nursing Team had attempted to treat at home. A's GP referred them to hospital for further treatment. A died following a fall in hospital.

C raised a number of concerns about the GP's assessment of A's condition and the decision to refer them to hospital. C said that the GP should have visited A at home, should have considered alternative treatments at home, and that the GP made assumptions about A's wishes and condition. C believed that there were no grounds for admitting A to hospital and that the GP's actions led directly to A's death.

We took independent advice from a general practitioner adviser. We found that the care and treatment provided to A was of a reasonable standard. It was not a requirement for the GP to visit A at home prior to referring them for admission. The admission had been discussed with C, and the decision to refer A for hospital admission was a reasonable clinical judgement for the GP to make in the circumstances. The GP's referral had acknowledged C and A's wishes for resuscitation to be attempted and the advice did not consider that there was an unreasonable focus on this in the admission.

We found that the care and treatment provided to A was reasonable and that the practice had acted appropriately when considering and responding to C's concerns. We did not uphold C's complaints.