

## Case study 2: Dr Dawson

Dr Dawson is an experienced general practitioner working in a busy inner-city practice. As her appraiser, you are aware that there has been a recent review about her involvement in a mental health case.

Six months previously, Dr Dawson was the duty on call doctor in the practice on a particularly busy day. Mr Khan, a 52 years old accountant, attended for the last appointment of the morning. The surgery was running 40 minutes behind time and there were already several requests in the diary for home visits between surgeries.

Mr Khan had been a patient with the practice for the last 15 years and had an unremarkable past history. He rarely attended the practice and his last review was six years previously for travel vaccinations.

Mr Khan attended with difficulty sleeping and anxiety. He was very concerned about his wife who had recently been diagnosed with breast cancer and was due to be admitted for surgery. He needed to be at home as his daughter has cerebral palsy and special needs. However, he was concerned about missing work and significant financial pressures. His demeanour was reserved, withdrawn and anxious. He looked unkempt and clearly not looking after himself. Dr Dawson listened and provided support and counsel and explained the treatments for breast cancer. A fit note was issued, and Dr Dawson requested that Mr Khan come back in two weeks for review. A pre-booked appointment was made by the practice.

Following this, Dr Dawson resumed her other duties which were already now well overdue.

Four weeks later, Mr Khan was admitted to acute services after jumping off a motorway bridge into oncoming traffic. Fortunately, Mr Khan was not hit by the traffic; however he sustained a fractured pelvis and femur. After recovering from his medical issues, he was cared for by the local psychiatric unit with a diagnosis of chronic depression and anxiety.

Following a review of the case, it became apparent that Mr Khan never returned to the surgery for review as requested and this had not been chased up. He had not returned to work either and the family had noted he had become more agitated and unwell. On review of his mental health, Mr Khan subsequently disclosed that he had been suffering with very low mood for the previous two years, with poor sleep, suicidal ideation and that he had one previous aborted attempt at suicide.