

## Significant Event (brief description of the event)

Complaint: Concerning Patient Number 19834

Date of Incident: 21.11.05

The patient who was 5.5 months pregnant at the time had a painful rash which was spreading. She sought advice & was told it might be shingles & to consult a doctor. The patient asked the GP if it could be shingles but was told that it was an allergic reaction & she couldn't be given any treatment. The patient says she was not reassured & was worried because of her pregnancy. After a week as the rash was worse the patient returned to the Practice to see her usual GP who diagnosed shingles.

The patient then had to be referred to ensure that it hadn't affected her pregnancy, which caused her great stress & worry. She felt let down that the initial diagnosis was wrong.

## 1. KEY ISSUES ARISING FROM DISCUSSION

Diagnosing rashes.

Whether shingles in pregnancy causes problems

## 2. POSITIVE POINTS

Confirmation from the Consultant Obstetrician that shingles in pregnancy does not cause problems/illness in the unborn child. The Consultant said he rarely treats shingles in pregnancy & does not feel treatment makes a difference to the course of the shingles.

## 3. AREAS OF CONCERN

That the patient was caused additional worry at the second consultation when told that 'if it (shingles) had been diagnosed earlier something might have been done but now it was too late for treatment'.

**4. SUGGESTIONS TO PREVENT RECURRENCE**

This patient was in her first pregnancy & was feeling the stress. It was felt that perhaps there should have been a greater emphasis placed on reassuring this lady that shingles in pregnancy does not cause problems for the unborn child.

**5. ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

A letter of apology & explanation to be sent to the patient.

**6. BY WHOM**

The GP

**7. REVIEW DATE**

30<sup>th</sup> January 2006