

Case: 201005312, Grampian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: communication, staff attitude, dignity, confidentiality
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the treatment her late husband, Mr C, received in hospital. Mr C had been diagnosed with oesophageal cancer in December 2008. He took ill in June 2010 and died shortly after admission to hospital. Mrs C complained about her husband's treatment for cancer, that the consultant would not consider alternative treatment; delayed in obtaining a second opinion and failed to ensure that Mr C's pain was managed adequately. Mrs C also complained that when her husband attended the Accident and Emergency Department in June 2010 the junior doctors were not supervised; Mr C's records were not available; and that Mrs C was asked to leave her husband's bedside while tests were being carried out.

Our investigation concluded that Mr C received appropriate care and treatment for his cancer in that the clinicians arranged appropriate investigations and that he was kept under regular review. We also found that Mr C received appropriate care and treatment in the Accident and Emergency Department and that Mr C was moved in order that he could be observed more closely. We also explained that it would be normal practice to ask a relative to leave while the doctors carried out tests to establish the patient's response to painful stimuli as this can cause further distress to both patient and relative. We also established that although Mr C's records were not to hand because he had attended a clinic that day, it would not have affected his clinical treatment. The board have informed us that records are now available electronically and, therefore, such a situation should not arise again.