

SPSO decision report

Case: 201103691, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: communication, staff attitude, dignity, confidentiality
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C's late mother (Mrs A) was admitted to hospital following a stroke. She was transferred to another ward a few days later. The day after her transfer to the ward, Mrs C told a nurse that her mother had a headache and needed pain relief. Mrs C said that the nurse was very defensive and extremely rude when she tried to discuss her concerns about her mother's pain relief. A scan was carried out, which did not show any physical cause for Mrs A's headache, and a psychiatrist later diagnosed a chronic tension headache.

Mrs C complained about the nurse's attitude and that Mrs A's pain relief was not reasonably managed after her stroke. After taking independent advice from one of our medical advisers, we found that Mrs A was given appropriate pain relief within a reasonable time, as only certain types of pain relief are normally provided after a stroke, to avoid affecting the patient's brain function. We found no evidence that the nurse had behaved inappropriately or in an unreasonable manner towards Mrs C.