

SPSO decision report

Case: 201105084, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained to the board about the treatment she received from a hospital doctor. Mrs C's GP had referred her there because Mrs C was suffering from urinary incontinence. The hospital doctor had conducted tests then referred her to neurology and a bladder specialist. Mrs C said the doctor failed to ask about her vaginal discharge and failed to carry out a pelvic ultrasound scan. Mrs C was subsequently diagnosed with a tumour in her womb. She believed that, had this been found sooner, then the cancer would not have spread to other organs.

We took advice from our medical adviser who noted that he saw no indication that a pelvic ultrasound scan was required given Mrs C's presented symptoms. Mrs C was assessed by three different clinicians with expertise in different areas. All the correspondence and medical notes suggest that Mrs C's symptoms were of incontinence rather than of vaginal discharge. When the symptoms did not ease, Mrs C was appropriately referred for further investigation. We noted that there was a delay in the process for arranging a hysteroscopy (a procedure that allows a surgeon to look inside the womb using a narrow tube-like telescopic camera) and the board apologised to Mrs C and explained the action that they had been taken to prevent a repeat occurrence before she complained to us. Although, therefore, we understood why Mrs C was concerned that a chance to diagnose the cancer may have been missed, we took the view that the care she received was appropriate in the circumstances.