

SPSO decision report

Case: 201200023, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr A was an elderly man who was admitted by ambulance to a hospital accident and emergency department after complaining of chest pains. His son (Mr C) complained that the board failed to carry out appropriate investigation, diagnosis and management of Mr A's condition before deciding to discharge him from the hospital, and unreasonably failed to place Mr A in isolation. Mr C also complained that the board failed to provide an appropriate response to his complaint.

We did not uphold Mr C's complaints. After looking at Mr A's hospital records and taking independent advice from our medical and nursing advisers, our investigation found that the decision to discharge Mr A was reasonable and was taken after appropriate investigation, diagnosis and management were carried out. Mr A's chest pain was investigated through observation, an electrocardiogram (a test that records the electrical activity of the heart) and a blood test. Mr A had taken aspirin before going to hospital, and so we found it was reasonable that other medicines were not administered. We also found that Mr A did not meet the criteria for isolation, in that he was not considered to have a diagnosis of infectious diarrhoea or diarrhoea associated with recent antibiotic use, or both. Nor was there any need to place Mr A in a single room and the decision not to initially place Mr A in one was reasonable. The board's response to Mr C's complaint was reasonable in light of the medical and nursing care provided and Mr A's hospital records, and we concluded that it addressed all the issues Mr C raised.