

SPSO decision report

Case: 201200679, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C made a complaint on behalf of his partner (Ms C) who was admitted to hospital with a suspected stroke. Two days after being admitted, Ms C collapsed in the bathroom, where she was discovered by ward staff. She was moved to an acute ward and was under observation for five days until she was discharged from hospital. It was thought that Ms C, who had epilepsy, might have suffered a seizure.

Four months later, Ms C met with a doctor at the hospital as she was concerned about what had happened. She had concerns that she had been given the wrong medication and that the collapse had not been reported as an accident nor been subject to an accident investigation. She was also unhappy about the actions of the medical team following her collapse, including the taking of a blood sample from her groin. Ms C provided a list of questions for the doctor to respond to, and he did so by letter.

Ms C remained dissatisfied and wrote again with some additional queries. This letter, however, was sent directly to the doctor and was not received by the board's complaints team. Ms C then sent her original set of questions to the complaints team, who responded. Ms C then complained to us that the board had not answered her additional questions.

During our investigation we found that the second letter had been addressed to the doctor and said that Ms C would be making a formal complaint. The doctor had, therefore, placed it in Ms C's medical file, and explained to her how to access the complaints procedure. We found this to be reasonable. However, this meant that the complaints team had not in fact seen Ms C's additional queries which is why they did not respond to them. We found that the board's responses to the complaints Ms C made to them were reasonable, and noted that the complaints team had in fact phoned her to try to establish what she was still concerned about. Although we did not uphold the complaint, we made a recommendation to allow Ms C another opportunity to raise any further matters with the board.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- contact Ms C to arrange either a meeting or further correspondence to address any outstanding concerns.