

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202470, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: communication, staff attitude, dignity, confidentiality
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained to the board that hospital staff failed to clearly explain to her late father (Mr A) or members of his family, the seriousness of his condition and that he had pancreatic cancer. The family only found out when they opened a letter which was intended for Mr A's GP.

We did not uphold this complaint. Our investigation found that there was evidence in the clinical records that staff had explained to Mr A on many occasions that there was a possibility that he had cancer. Mr A had, however, told staff that he did not wish any of his family members to be present when he received the results of investigations and said that he would tell them himself.