

SPSO decision report

Case: 201400729, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her father (Mr A) when he was admitted to Monklands Hospital. Mrs C also had concerns about the handling of the complaint she subsequently made to the board.

Mr A was suffering from heart failure and was being cared for at home when he had a fall at home. He was seen by his GP who diagnosed a urinary tract infection and prescribed antibiotics (a range of drugs to fight bacterial infections). Mr A's condition deteriorated and he was referred by an out-of-hours GP to the hospital. The admission record noted his confusion, decreased mobility and the diagnosis by the GP. A urine sample was taken and x-rays were taken.

Mr A was reviewed the next morning and considered ready for discharge home with support from ASSET (a multi-disciplinary home care team) but the family were concerned that he was not well enough. Mr A was kept in hospital and given further antibiotics. He had a number of falls while in hospital that Mrs C felt contributed to his eventual death, which occurred less than three weeks after admission.

Our investigation included taking independent advice from two of our advisers, a physician specialising in the care of the elderly and a senior nurse. Our advisers were satisfied that the care and treatment provided were reasonable in the circumstances. Mr A was appropriately assessed and monitored for risk of falls, and the physician adviser was of the view that the initial consideration of discharge with support was reasonable.

On the matter of the complaints handling, we identified unreasonable delays which the board had already acknowledged and apologised for to Mrs C. Appropriate remedial action had been taken to minimise the risk of a recurrence. Although we upheld this complaint, no further recommendations were made.