

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201500442, Lanarkshire NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained to us that staff at Monklands Hospital had failed to provide his mother (Mrs A) with appropriate clinical treatment in relation to her nasojejunal (NJ) feeding tube (a tube placed through the nose and into the small bowel to maintain nutrition when patients are unable to take sufficient food by mouth). Mrs A had been admitted to the hospital with high output from her stoma (a stoma is a surgically made pouch on the outside of the body; when the output from a stoma is high, it means that you are losing more fluid and are at a greater risk of becoming dehydrated) and acute kidney injury.

We took independent advice on this case from a consultant general surgeon. We found that Mrs A had initially been treated appropriately. It was likely that the NJ feeding tube was exacerbating the high output stoma. It had been reasonable to allow Mrs A to remove the NJ tube under supervision, as this reduced her anxiety about having it removed. This did not cause an oesophageal perforation (a tear in the tube that takes food from the mouth to the stomach) that she subsequently experienced.

However, we found that Mrs A had been discharged from hospital without evidence that the measures taken in relation to her high output stoma were fully effective and would prevent a readmission with the same problem. During our investigation, the board told us that they were working on guidelines on high stoma output for staff, but these had yet to be finalised. We also found the records of communication with Mrs A and her family were inadequate. In view of these failings, we upheld Mr C's complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- issue a written apology to Mr C for the failings identified;
- provide evidence that guidelines for high output stomas have been developed and circulated to relevant staff; and
- feed back our findings to relevant staff.