

SPSO decision report

Case: 201500673, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: admission / discharge / transfer procedures

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Miss C's mother (Mrs A) was admitted to hospital at Mearns Kirk House, following her discharge from the Prince and Princess of Wales Hospice where she received five weeks' care with advanced cancer. Miss C's sister (Mrs D) took their mother home from the hospital and Mrs A was officially discharged from the hospital into Mrs D's care three days later, following a meeting earlier that day at the hospital with medical staff and the family to discuss Mrs A's care.

Miss C complained about the board's decision to discharge her mother from the hospital and the way this decision was made. She listed a number of concerns, including that her mother was discharged without any input from her GP, with no care package in place and with no referral to a district or palliative care team.

We obtained independent medical advice on Miss C's complaint from a consultant physician in elderly care medicine. The adviser said this was an unusual case in that Mrs A had been taken home by Mrs D for a week's trial prior to her formal discharge. The board did not have time to plan Mrs A's discharge in the normal way. Mrs A and Mrs D were adamant that Mrs A should go home and the adviser said it would, therefore, be difficult to be critical of the board if their normal discharge procedure was not followed when they were trying to accommodate Mrs A and Mrs D's wishes. Therefore, we did not conclude that the board unreasonably discharged Mrs A from the hospital.