

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201504252, Grampian NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** admission / discharge / transfer procedures  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained that following an operation for pancreatic cancer she was discharged home from Aberdeen Royal Infirmary without being given medication (which was specifically for digestive problems involving the pancreas). As a result, Ms C's condition deteriorated and she developed symptoms of severe pain, sickness and diarrhoea. She had to be readmitted to hospital and the medication was re-started, and her symptoms began to improve.

We took independent advice from a medical adviser who noted that it was a discretionary decision for the consultant to make prior to Ms C's discharge from hospital and that this was a reasonable decision for them to take. Some clinicians would prescribe this specific medication on discharge whilst others would not. The fact that the medication was not prescribed was not, in itself, an indication of a failure in service.

We found that the decision to discharge Ms C without medication was appropriate in the circumstances but that it was unfortunate that her condition deteriorated and that she required a further admission to hospital. With hindsight, if Ms C had been given this medication, it may have prevented her deterioration but the consultant had to consider the available information at the time of discharge. We did not uphold the complaint but noted that the matter should have been discussed with Ms C prior to discharge.