

SPSO decision report

Case: 201507914, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment the board provided to her late husband (Mr A) at Wishaw General Hospital.

Mr A underwent an urgent left groin lymph node biopsy. He re-attended hospital the next day with a serious infection. Mr A remained at the hospital for approximately five months. He was discharged and remained out of hospital for approximately eight months. Mr A was readmitted with a urinary tract infection, but his condition deteriorated over approximately two months and he died.

Mrs C raised a number of concerns relating to the medical and nursing care during Mr A's admissions, as well as communication within the hospital and with Mr A's family. This included concerns that the initial procedure was carried out incorrectly, that Mr A was mishandled physically by staff, and that hygiene practices were poor.

We took independent advice from consultant in general medicine and from a nurse. We found that consent for the initial operation had been appropriately obtained, and that the infection was a rare but recognised complication of the procedure. We noted that the seriousness of this infection had severely impacted on Mr A's health and had led to two long and complicated admissions. We found that the nursing care was reasonable, with appropriate monitoring and wound care recorded. We also noted that we were unable to identify evidence to support Mrs C's concerns about Mr A being mishandled physically at the hospital. We did not uphold these aspects of Mrs C's complaint.

We upheld Mrs C's complaints regarding communication within the hospital and communication with the family. However, we found that the board had already accepted these failings and had apologised. As such, we made no further recommendations.