

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508221, Grampian NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: nurses / nursing care

Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained about the community nursing care provided to her late mother (Mrs A) who was elderly. Miss C said that the community nurse undertook a procedure which caused Mrs A severe distress and brought her to the point of collapse. Miss C said that she and her mother had not consented to the procedure and believed it was unreasonable given Mrs A's health and age.

We took independent advice from a nursing adviser. We found that the procedure undertaken was necessary and failing to intervene could have had serious clinical consequences. We also found that the clinical decision-making was reasonable and that the procedure was within the community nurse's professional remit. However, there was no evidence that verbal consent was obtained for the procedure, which was unreasonable. We made a recommendation to address this.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- bring the failings around consent to the attention of relevant staff and ensure that they are addressed; and
- apologise for the failures this investigation identified.