

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508328, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about the care and treatment in hospital of her daughter (Miss A) who suffers from complex regional pain syndrome (a painful condition normally treated with desensitisation and physiotherapy). Miss A was admitted to the hospital where she has remained for over a year without improvement to her condition. Ms C raised concerns that Miss A was not receiving appropriate specialist input as staff at the hospital did not have experience with Miss A's condition. Ms C also said Miss A was not able to get quality sleep due to her position on the ward, which Ms C considered was impacting on her rehabilitation and exacerbating her pain.

The board said Miss A had received appropriate care from an experienced team but she had not felt able to participate with the physiotherapy and desensitisation program, so her condition had not improved. The board explained that the decision to keep Miss A in a central location was due to her high falls risk. While they agreed that lack of sleep was not desirable, they did not consider that this was impacting on Miss A's rehabilitation.

After taking independent advice from a consultant in pain management and a nurse, we did not uphold Ms C's complaint. We found Miss A's care involved appropriate input from a multi-disciplinary team. The medical adviser considered that the team were appropriately experienced and qualified to manage this case and noted that the team had also discussed the case with clinicians both within and outside the UK. In relation to Miss A's position on the ward, both advisers considered this was appropriate in view of the risk assessments carried out by staff.