

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508524, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: nurses / nursing care
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that a prison health centre nurse refused to give him a replacement asthma inhaler because he could not return the empty inhaler. Mr C said he was not told of this policy, and he complained about the board's handling of his complaint.

We could not determine whether the nurse's actions at the time were reasonable, as, other than the two differing accounts of what happened, there was no evidence to prove what actually happened. We also found that the board's handling of Mr C's complaint was adequate. We did not uphold either aspect of Mr C's complaint. However, we were concerned about the nurse's written record of the incident, and we made a recommendation to address this point.

There was no evidence that the board had informed Mr C of the inhaler exchange policy or protocol, and the board were unable to provide us with a copy of the protocol, as it was no longer available because the staff who had developed it had left the board. We upheld this aspect of Mr C's complaint, and we made recommendations to address the board's failings.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- ensure that the nurse involved is reminded of the importance of complying with Section 10 of the Nursing and Midwifery Council code in relation to record-keeping;
- ensure that if prisoners are to continue returning empty inhalers, a replacement protocol is written without delay and is stored so it can be accessed and will not be lost due to staff changes; and
- ensure that prisoners are made aware of the replacement protocol, and provide us with evidence of this.