

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508724, Orkney NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her husband (Mr A) by the board. She complained that there was an unreasonable delay in the board diagnosing Mr A with lymphoma (cancer of the lymph nodes). She also complained that a doctor had refused to sign a Personal Independence Payment (PIP) form for Mr A when he became ill. (Personal Independence Payment is a benefit that can be awarded to those with long-term ill-health or a disability to help cover the additional costs of their illness.) Lastly, she complained that the board did not provide a reasonable standard of palliative care to Mr A.

We took independent advice on the complaint from a nursing adviser, a GP and a surgical consultant. We found that the board carried out reasonable investigations into Mr A's presenting symptoms over a period of several years and there were no signs of lymphoma that were unreasonably missed. We found that there was no evidence to suggest that a doctor had refused to sign a PIP form. We also found that whilst there was some delay in Mr A receiving appropriate medication before his death, the standard of palliative care provided to him was reasonable.