

SPSO decision report

Case: 201600335, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C, an advocacy and support worker, complained on behalf of Ms A about the care and treatment given to Ms A after she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Ms A was treated with surgery followed by chemotherapy and radiotherapy at the Western General Hospital, from which she appeared to be recovering well. However, part way through her course of chemotherapy, Ms A was not given a review appointment to establish how she was progressing, as per a local protocol. Ms A maintained that she had been 'lost to the system' and received inadequate care. Ms C also said that the board failed to respond reasonably to Ms A's complaint.

We took independent advice from a consultant oncologist. We found that Mrs A's treatment had been given in terms of national guidelines and had been reasonable and appropriate. While it had been intended to review her part way through her chemotherapy, Ms A was seen a few weeks later and her treatment continued. We did not uphold this aspect of Ms C's complaint.

However, we noted that the board failed to deal with Ms A's concerns about her treatment in a timely manner and we therefore upheld this aspect of Ms C's complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- remind the staff involved in this case of the necessity of adhering to their stated complaints procedure.