

SPSO decision report

Case: 201600845, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that staff at the A&E department at Glasgow Royal Infirmary failed to provide him with appropriate treatment for his reported symptoms of acute eczema. The issues raised by Mr C included that his concerns about his condition were dismissed and that the registrar in emergency medicine who attended to him only glanced at his acute eczema when assessing him. Mr C said his eczema was infected and needed immediate proper treatment. Mr C also said the registrar failed to forward medical documentation about his eczema to his GP.

We obtained independent medical advice from a consultant emergency physician. The adviser explained that the registrar's visual inspection of Mr C's eczema was in accordance with relevant guidelines and was an assessment of the severity of his condition. The adviser said that Mr C's temperature, respiratory and heart rate were all normal and there was no clear indication from his medical records that he required immediate treatment for his eczema. It was noted that the registrar discussed Mr C's condition with him, gave him advice, prescribed medication to help ease the itching and advised him to see his GP for review and ongoing management. The adviser said there was no evidence that Mr C's treatment was inappropriate. The board acknowledged that a discharge summary did not appear to have been completed and sent to Mr C's GP, and the board apologised for this omission.

On balance, we considered that the board did not fail to provide Mr C with appropriate treatment and we did not uphold his complaint. However, we made a recommendation for action by the board regarding the forwarding of medical documentation about Mr C's eczema to his GP.

Recommendations

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- A process for discharge summaries should be in place for when patients are discharged from A&E. This process should require staff to complete discharge summaries and send them to the patients' GPs.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.