

# SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201601299, Grampian NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

## Summary

Mr C complained on behalf of his wife (Mrs A) about the care provided by mental health services at Dr Gray's Hospital. Specifically, Mr C complained about the way in which a psychiatrist and a community psychiatric nurse (CPN) handled a request for a letter for Mrs A to be excused from attending court as a witness and that they had discharged her from the service without notifying her or offering alternative support.

We took independent advice from a consultant psychiatrist and a mental health adviser. We were critical that the psychiatrist had not made a record of a phone conversation that took place with Mr C at the time to evidence the advice and support offered. This was contrary to national guidance in relation to record-keeping which we were critical of and we made recommendations in relation to this. We also found that the board had acknowledged and apologised that their psychiatrist and CPN had not properly communicated with Mrs A regarding her discharge from the service. The board said that they had taken action to remind staff to share all important communication with patients. We considered that the psychiatrist had not documented adequate reasons supporting why Mrs A was discharged, nor had they offered her the option of another consultation or seeing a different clinician. We also found that it would have been more appropriate for the CPN to have written to Mrs A and explained the options available to her in terms of continuing or not continuing the service. We upheld Mr C's complaints.

## Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C and Mrs A for failing to keep appropriate records.
- Apologise to Mrs A for failing to offer her the option of a further consultation or follow-up appointment with a different clinician prior to being discharged.

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

- The findings of this report should be shown to the doctor involved to ensure that in the future timely and adequate records are maintained.

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.