

SPSO decision report

Case: 201602402, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the care and treatment his late wife (Mrs A) received from the board at Monklands Hospital. Mrs A was initially admitted to hospital for seven days, with concerns about her eating and her bowels not moving. She was discharged home for three days and received some medical treatment at home but was then readmitted to hospital. Mrs A died in hospital four weeks later. Mr C also said that the board withheld long-standing medication from his wife and that they failed to reasonably communicate with him during his wife's admission. Mr C explained that his wife had suffered a stroke previously, which impaired her ability to communicate.

We took independent advice from a consultant in general/stroke medicine and geriatrics. We did not consider that the board failed to provide reasonable care and treatment for Mrs A and did not uphold this part of the complaint. However, there were failings in the note-taking by hospital staff and we made a recommendation to address this.

The evidence suggested that Mrs A's medication was not prescribed for her during her second admission and that there was no clearly documented decision for this. We found that, as it was a long-standing medication and Mr C would have been well placed to judge the effect of this being withdrawn, the cessation of the medication should have been discussed with Mr C. We upheld this part of the complaint. We also considered that the board failed to reasonably communicate with Mr C during his wife's admission and we upheld this part of the complaint. We asked the board to provide evidence of the remedial action they said they had already taken in both of these areas.

Recommendations

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

- Staff should note details of conversations with patients' family members regarding patients' care and treatment in patients' medical records.

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.