

SPSO decision report

Case: 201701261, Fife NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment given to her late father-in-law (Mr A) after he was admitted to a GP led unit for rehabilitation after a fall. She said that he was not properly supported or cared for which caused him to fall again and break his hip, and that there was a delay in transferring him to hospital for an operation. As well as these concerns, Mrs C also complained about communication with the family and that Mr A's wife (Mrs B)'s views were not taken into account when Mr A's discharge was being considered.

We took independent advice from a GP and from a registered nurse. We found that, while Mr A's medical care was reasonable, including his care when he fell, there were gaps in his nursing notes which were unacceptable and represented a failure in the care provided. For this reason, the first of Mrs C's complaints was upheld. The board said that they had taken steps to ensure improvement in record-keeping, and we asked them to provide us with evidence of this. We did not make any further recommendations in connection with this.

Regarding Mrs C's complaint about communication, we found that Mr A lacked capacity and could not make decisions about his own care. We found that there was no power of attorney in place to do this on his behalf. However, we noted that there were detailed discussions with the family about Mr A's discharge and that Mrs B's views on this were taken into account. We did not uphold this aspect of Mrs C's complaint.