

SPSO decision report

Case: 201701763, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late grandfather (Mr A) at Ninewells Hospital. Mr A was admitted to hospital and treated for sepsis (a blood infection). It was initially thought that this was caused by a chest infection but investigation showed that the source was Mr A's gallbladder. Mrs C complained that staff had not listened to family concerns about the source of the infection and that this had affected his treatment. Mrs C was concerned that the placement of a drain or other treatment was unreasonably delayed and that an appropriate scan had not been done. Mrs C considered that a different approach could have prevented Mr A's death.

We took independent advice from a consultant interventional radiologist (a clinician who would place a drain in the gallbladder) and a consultant physician (a senior doctor). We found that Mr A had received appropriate treatment and investigation of his symptoms. The adviser indicated that staff were aware that the gallbladder could be the source of infection and that there were no unreasonable delays in the particular circumstances of Mr A's case. We considered that earlier placement of a drain would not have resulted in a different outcome for Mr A. We did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.