

SPSO decision report

Case: 201704055, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that there was a delay in a scan taken of his chest area being formally reported at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary. Mr C had lung cancer and was undergoing treatment for this. At an appointment with a cancer specialist he reported symptoms of breathlessness and the specialist referred him for a scan and to a respiratory consultant. Mr C underwent the scan the same day as his respiratory appointment, at which point there was no formal report of his scan. The formal report was produced ten days later, and it was discovered that Mr C had a pulmonary embolism (blockage of a blood vessel in the lung). He was therefore immediately admitted to hospital for treatment. Mr C complained that the scan should have been checked and reported on the same day as it was taken, in order to ensure there were no significant problems.

We took independent advice from a consultant radiologist. We found that there are no specific standards for reporting scans and that there was not an unreasonable delay in Mr C's scan being reported. We also found that the area of pulmonary embolism shown on the scan was relatively small and would not have been recognised by a non-radiologist. We found it reasonable that the scan was not reviewed by a radiologist on the day it was taken and that the board had reasonable protocols in place to ensure significant pathology was related to clinicians in a timely manner. We did not uphold Mr C's complaint.