

SPSO decision report

Case: 201704189, Highland NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C, who works for an advocacy and support agency, complained on behalf of her client (Ms A). Over the past twenty years Ms A has suffered from balance issues and problems with her eyes. Over a period of years, Ms A attended the ophthalmology (eye) and neurology (brain and nervous system) departments of Raigmore Hospital. Her symptoms were assessed and investigated and she was referred for a second opinion, but no causes were found for her symptoms. The ophthalmology department decided not to arrange further appointments for her and it was suggested that she attend the rehabilitation clinic. Ms A considered that clinicians had given up on her and that she had been disbelieved. Ms C complained to us that the decision to discharge Ms A to the rehabilitation clinic was unreasonable, as she had not yet been diagnosed.

We took independent advice from consultants in ophthalmology and neurology. We found that all of Ms A's care and treatment had been reasonable and appropriate but that, despite this, Ms A's symptoms remained. It was acknowledged that this was very challenging for her, however we considered that the absence of a diagnosis or abnormal test findings did not mean that she had been disbelieved. Furthermore, we found that it was sensible and reasonable to refer her to the rehabilitation clinic which was best placed to deal with her continuing condition. We did not uphold the complaint.