

SPSO decision report

Case: 201707180, Dundee Health and Social Care Partnership
Sector: health and social care
Subject: sheltered housing issues/residential homes
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained about the level of communication provided by the partnership regarding the care of her father (Mr A). Mr A was moved from a rehabilitation centre to another tenancy, however, this property did not suit his needs and Mr A returned to the centre. Miss C, who has financial power of attorney, complained that the partnership failed to reasonably involve Mr A's family members in decisions about his care. Miss C also complained that Mr A's care plan was not shared with his family, or made available to the rehabilitation centre, with no provisions implemented to ensure a smooth transition to his new tenancy.

Miss C complained to the partnership who advised that they were attempting to balance promoting independence for Mr A, who did have capacity, against involving his family. They acknowledged that communication had been poor but were vague about what steps would be taken to avoid similar problems occurring in the future. Miss C was unhappy with this response and brought her complaint to us.

The partnership responded to us and explained that on further review, they accepted many of the failings that Miss C identified in her complaint. We noted that communication had been poor between the partnership and Miss C and that relevant parties had not seen the content of the care plan. We upheld Miss C's complaints.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr A and his family for the distress and inconvenience caused by these issues. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance.

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

- Staff should ensure adequate communication with a service user's family and should make sure that communication with the family is appropriately documented.
- The partnership should ensure that staff reflect on and learn from the findings of this investigation. In particular, there should be reflection on ensuring family members have sight of the up-to-date care plan and that existing care providers are appropriately informed of plans (and transition provisions) prior to a service user moving out of the care setting.

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.