

SPSO decision report



Case: 201708248, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment given to her elderly mother (Mrs A) by both the out-of-hours (OOH) service and the Emergency Department (ED) of the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital. She said that Mrs A called the OOH service early in the morning as she feared she had sepsis (a blood infection). A GP attended and decided that she could remain at home. Mrs C believed that Mrs A should have been admitted to hospital. Later the same day, Mrs C took Mrs A to the ED as she said that she was experiencing rigours (episodes of shaking). She was later discharged. Mrs C said that Mrs A had to return to hospital within the week, when she was diagnosed as having sepsis.

We took independent advice from a GP and from a consultant in emergency medicine. We found that both at home and in hospital, Mrs A had been treated reasonably. The GP initially examining her had found her temperature, pulse rate, oxygen saturation and blood pressure all to be in the normal range. She had no 'red flags' in terms of the guidance and she was given clear advice about what to do if her condition worsened. When Mrs A attended the ED, all the tests undertaken were normal and did not indicate further screening. As Mrs C was unhappy with this, further examination was made, but again this did not indicate admission or screening for sepsis. While Mrs C said that Mrs A went on to develop sepsis within a few days, we found that this was not unusual. We did not uphold the complaints.