

SPSO decision report



Case: 201801463, 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 partnership's decision to move her father (Mr A) to sheltered accommodation. Miss C had Power of Attorney for her father and was of the view he required a care home setting to meet his needs. Mr A moved into his new tenancy but shortly after was involved in an incident which left him detained in hospital. Mr A was then discharged to a care home setting. Miss C complained that her views had not been considered and questioned the decision to move her father to sheltered accommodation.

The partnership responded by explaining that there is no specific guidance on whether someone's care would be best met in supported housing or 24 hour care. They said that their normal practice would always be to use the least restrictive option that was suitable. They advised the decision to try housing with care was a multi-disciplinary decision which included Miss C and was approved by the housing committee. The partnership also advised that a social worker only became involved toward the end of the process when Mr A's needs increased and the assessment became more complex. Miss C was unhappy with this response and brought her complaint to us.

We found that the quality of information provided by the partnership was poor and limited with no clear explanation about why the decision was made to move Mr A into sheltered accommodation rather than a care home. We noted that the partnership did not have any procedures which guide when it is appropriate for a social worker to become involved in the decision-making process. We took independent advice from a social worker who found that the council failed to involve a social worker at the appropriate time in the assessment process as they only became involved after Mr A was admitted to hospital. Given this and the poor quality of assessment, we upheld Miss C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Miss C for failing to involve a social worker in the assessment process and for failing to communicate all options to her in a reasonable manner. 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:

- The partnership should ensure that there is clarity about staff roles to ensure they complete assessments for care appropriately.
- The partnership should reflect on the failings identified and actions for learning and improvement should be proposed to prevent similar issues occurring in the future.