

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201804687, Tayside NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about the care and treatment the board provided to his late wife (Mrs A). In particular, he was concerned that there had been a delay in diagnosing an occurrence of cancer. In response to Mr C's complaint, the board did not identify any delay in the diagnosis.

Mrs A was initially diagnosed with bowel cancer. Surgery was performed to remove part of Mrs A's bowel, and she also received chemotherapy treatment. Mrs A received follow-up care from the colorectal (conditions of the colon, rectum and anus) and oncology (cancer) teams. In this period, she continued to experience abdominal symptoms. Following an annual surveillance scan, peritoneal cancer (a cancer that develops in a thin layer of tissue that lines the abdomen) was diagnosed. Mrs A received palliative treatment until she later died from her illness.

We received independent advice from a colorectal surgeon and a radiologist (a doctor who specialises in diagnosing and treating disease and injury through the use of medical imaging techniques such as x-rays and other scans). We found that the abdominal symptoms Mrs A experienced were associated with the treatment she received for bowel cancer. We also noted that development of primary peritoneal cancer was very rare. Therefore, we concluded that there was no failing by the board to have identified peritoneal cancer at an earlier stage. We did not uphold this complaint.