

SPSO decision report

Case: 201807843, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late daughter (Ms A). Ms A had a history of breast cancer and she had been complaining of severe leg pain. She attended A&E to request an emergency MRI scan, however, she was advised by hospital staff that she did not meet the criteria for an emergency scan. An out-patient referral was made instead. Ms A was later diagnosed with cancer and underwent surgery to repair a cancer related fracture of her hip. Following the surgery, it was identified that Ms A had a neck fracture.

Mrs C complained that the hospital staff unreasonably refused to perform the MRI scan when Ms A attended A&E and that the board failed to provide a reasonable explanation for the cause of Ms A's neck fractures.

We took independent medical advice from an orthopaedic (conditions involving the musculoskeletal system) surgeon. We found that an emergency MRI scan can only be performed if the patient is suffering from a neurological deficit, therefore it was correct that Ms A was advised she did not meet the criteria. We also found that there was no evidence to suggest that Ms A's neck fracture occurred during surgery, and it was reasonable to conclude that the fracture developed due to the progression of the cancer into her bones. We did not uphold the complaints.