

SPSO decision report

Case: 201808080, Grampian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the care and treatment that his child (Child A) received for jaundice (a yellowish or greenish pigmentation of the skin and whites of the eyes due to high bilirubin levels. Bilirubin is the reddish yellow pigment made during the normal breakdown of red blood cells) in the days following their birth. In particular, Mr C was concerned that Child A did not receive a blood transfusion and received UV phototherapy instead.

We took independent advice from a midwife and a consultant neonatologist (a doctor who specialises in the medical care of newborn infants, especially ill or premature newborns). We found that the care and treatment provided to Child A was reasonable and in accordance with relevant guidelines. We also found that, as Child A's bilirubin level responded well to the phototherapy treatment, it was reasonable that they did not receive a blood transfusion. We did not uphold this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

Mr C also complained about the way in which the board handled his complaint. We found that the board failed to provide a revised timescale for when Mr C could expect to receive a response to his complaint. We upheld this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for failing to provide a revised timescale for when he could expect to receive a response to his complaints. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets

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

- Complaints should be handled in line with the model complaints handling procedure. The model complaints handling procedure and guidance can be found here: www.valuingcomplaints.org.uk/handling-complaints/complaints-procedures/nhs.

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.