

SPSO decision report



Case: 201905638, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained on behalf of their spouse (A) about the care and treatment A received from the board. A has Parkinson's disease (a condition in which parts of the brain become progressively damaged over many years, causing physical and neurological symptoms). A was admitted to the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital with a suspected clot. Staff thought that A had suffered a stroke and physiotherapy was arranged as part of their recovery. Following an MRI, it was found that some of A's vertebrae (the bones of the spine) were displaced and were compressing the spinal cord. A was transferred to a consultant neurosurgeon (specialist in surgery of the brain or other nerve tissue).

We took independent advice from a consultant geriatrician (a doctor specialising in medical care for the elderly) with a special interest in Parkinson's disease. We noted that A had had Parkinson's disease for 15 years. They had also had surgery to their neck and lumbar stenosis (narrowing of the bone spaces where the nerves leave the spine in the lower back). A was reviewed by the Parkinson's specialist who suggested that a CT brain scan be carried out. This showed a minor change in the brain which could have been consistent with a small stroke. However, a later scan ruled this out. An MRI scan was ordered of the spine and it was following this scan that A's condition was diagnosed.

We noted that A had a complex medical condition and the symptoms they were exhibiting could have come about by a number of different causes. We found that the board worked through reasonable diagnoses and requested appropriate medical imaging. Therefore, we did not uphold the complaint.