

SPSO decision report



Case: 201906391, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained that their adult child (A)'s dyslexia was not taken into account when the board provided them with care and treatment, and that the care and treatment was not of a reasonable standard. C believed that if A's treatment had been better, then they would have had a better chance of surviving their cancer diagnosis. C felt that A's condition had been misdiagnosed because of A's age, as they were much younger than most people who suffered from this type of cancer.

We took independent advice from an appropriately qualified adviser. We found that the board accepted that they had not been aware of A's dyslexia. We also found that there was no evidence that A lacked the capacity to make decisions about their care and treatment and that at the majority of their appointments, they had been accompanied by their other parent. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of C's complaint.

In terms of their care and treatment, we found that A had been difficult to diagnose because the options were limited for medical staff, due to A's unwillingness to agree to treatment. However, it would have been appropriate for A's case to have been discussed earlier at a multidisciplinary team meeting. This might have resulted in A's cancer being identified sooner. We upheld this aspect of C's complaint. However, this did not mean that the outcome for A would have been different, as the cancer was very aggressive, and it was unlikely that its progression could have been slowed or halted.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for not having held a multidisciplinary team meeting to discuss A's case at the earliest opportunity. 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:

- The board should ensure clinicians have time to access multidisciplinary team meetings including all appropriate specialties to discuss unusual cases.

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.