

SPSO decision report

Case: 201911145, Grampian NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Admission / discharge / transfer procedures
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained on behalf of their parent (A). A had a fall at home and was admitted to hospital due to a fractured hip. C was concerned that A was discharged from hospital only a few days after they had surgery. We took independent advice from an orthopaedic surgeon (specialist in diagnosing and treating conditions involving the musculoskeletal system) and an occupational therapist. We found that a comprehensive occupational therapy assessment was carried out prior to A's discharge which fully considered A's home environment and that the decision to discharge A four days after surgery was reasonable and met the targets set out in the Scottish Standards of Care for Hip Fracture Patients. We also found that the discharge and medications were discussed with A.

We, therefore, did not uphold C's complaint about A's discharge from hospital.

C also complained about the way the board handled their complaint. We found that the board did not always proactively update C or provide a revised timescale when they could expect to receive the response to their complaint. Therefore, we upheld C's complaint in this regard.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for not always proactively updating them or providing a revised timescale for when they could expect to receive a response to their complaint. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Where the 20 working day timescale for a response cannot be met, the complainant must be kept updated on the reason for the delay and given a revised timescale for completion.

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.