

SPSO decision report

Case: 202001329, Highland NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C was referred to Raigmore Hospital by their midwife with high blood pressure. C was pregnant and there were concerns they had pre-eclampsia (a condition that causes high blood pressure during pregnancy and after labour). C said that on attending the hospital they did not receive reasonable treatment over a four-day period. C also considered the care provided to their newborn child (A) was unreasonable.

We took independent advice from a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist (a doctor who specialises in pregnancy, childbirth and the female reproductive system) and a consultant neonatologist (a doctor who specialises in the medical care of newborn infants, especially ill or premature newborns). We found that the tests carried out when C attended the ward were reasonable and in line with relevant guidelines. We considered it was reasonable that C was initially discharged prior to their later admission and when C's condition worsened, appropriate action was taken. As such, we did not uphold this complaint.

In relation to C's concerns about A's health, we considered that the actions taken after concerns were raised about A's condition were reasonable. While we considered that the communication and documentation was below a reasonable standard, the clinical care provided to A was reasonable. As such, we did not uphold this complaint. However, feedback was provided to the board.

C complained that the board failed to reasonably respond to their complaint. We found that while the response to the complaint was accurate in relation to the medical records, it would have been good practice to provide more detail as to the board's position on certain points. A consultant spoke with C after events and arranged for further details to be provided regarding A's care, which was good practice, particularly considering the board had identified communication issues. While further detail could have been given, and we provided feedback to the board on this point, on balance, we found the response to be reasonable. As such, we did not uphold the complaint.