SPSO decision report

Case: **202002290, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division**
Sector: Health
Subject: Admission / discharge / transfer procedures
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about the treatment provided at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh to their late parent (A) after they were admitted having suffered a stroke. C complained that the board failed to discharge A in a reasonable timescale.

We took independent advice from a consultant geriatrician (a specialist in medicine of the elderly). We considered that, while medically well, A was not fit for discharge, requiring a further period of in-patient care to recover prior to being ready to return home. As such, we did not uphold this aspect of C's complaint.

C complained that the board failed to provide reasonable care to allow A to maintain function in their legs. We found that board staff were trying to maximise what A could do, however due to their stroke, pre-existing conditions and subsequent infection, their attempts were unsuccessful. Physiotherapy input started two days after A's admission, which we considered to be prompt. We also found evidence that A attended sixteen physiotherapy sessions, with more offered but A was not well enough to accept them. This indicated that there was regular input by physiotherapists. As such, we did not uphold this aspect of C's complaint.

During A's admission, they contracted influenza (flu). C complained that the board failed to provide reasonable treatment after they contracted influenza. We found that antibiotics were administered reasonably and A's condition was appropriately monitored. We noted the challenges in determining if a worsening of someone's condition was related solely to the initial influenza infection, or if an additional (secondary) infection with another organism was involved. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of C's complaint. However, we noted that consideration should have been given to anti-viral treatment for A, as indicated by the guidance available at the time and we fed this back to the board.