

SPSO decision report

Case: 202005527, Fife NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about treatment provided to their late parent (A) from the board during a hospital admission. C complained that A had been discharged from hospital when it had been unsafe to do so, that staff had failed to insert an intravenous line so that A could receive fluids, that A had developed a pressure sore on their sacrum (a bone in the spine), and that insufficient investigations had been carried out to establish the cause of A's refusal of treatment.

The board stated that A had received fluids intravenously on admission but that their cannula (a tube that can be inserted into the body) had become blocked. Further unsuccessful attempts were made to reinsert the cannula before A declined any more attempts to be made. A also had refused to accept oral treatment and did not wish to undergo investigations to establish cause of their illness, preferring instead to be discharged home. The board also stated that A had been non-compliant and had not wished to change position in bed resulting in the development of a pressure sore, for which arrangements were put in place with district nurses upon A's discharge.

We took independent advice from a consultant geriatrician. We found that the investigations the board had carried out to establish the cause of A's illness had been reasonable as had the overall treatment provided during A's admission. We noted that the records showed A had declined several attempts to treat their symptoms and carry out further investigations and that there was no evidence in the available records to indicate that A had lacked capacity to make decisions about the medical treatment that they wished to receive. In relation to A's discharge, the records also showed that the board had requested an assessment of A to be carried out by their Integrated Assessment Team but that this could not be completed due to A leaving the hospital. We found that management of A's pressure sore had reasonable.

For these reasons, we did not uphold the complaint.