

SPSO decision report



Case: 202101586, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

Sector: Health

Subject: Nurses / nursing care

Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C's parent (A) lived in a nursing home and had been shielding during the COVID-19 pandemic. A was later admitted to hospital and was placed in a green pathway (a ward for COVID-negative patients) ward in preparation for emergency surgery. Following surgery and a few days in the High Dependency Unit, A was transferred to another ward which C was advised was a red pathway ward (a ward for COVID-positive patients). A was discharged over a week later.

C complained to the board about A's transfer to a red pathway ward and had not been satisfied with the explanation the board provided. C also complained about the standard of nursing care, the decision to discharge A, and that the board failed to arrange follow-up care for A following their discharge.

We took independent advice from a nurse and a consultant geriatrician (specialist in medicine of the elderly). We found that, while the decision to transfer A to a red pathway ward had been reasonable and appropriate in the specific circumstances, the board had not reasonably explained the decision to C. Therefore, we upheld this part of C's complaint.

We also found that the standard of nursing care and decision to discharge A was reasonable. The board also made the relevant referrals to the appropriate community services after A's discharge. Therefore, we did not uphold these aspects of C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for not explaining the rationale behind the transfer of A to a red pathway ward. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

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.