

## SPSO decision report



**Case:** 202103225, Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership  
**Sector:** Health and Social Care  
**Subject:** Carer's assessments  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

C was a carer for their parent (A). A carer's assessment self-referral form was submitted on C's behalf to the partnership's Carers Team. C was contacted by the Carers Team and advised that, in the circumstances, the requested assessment would be carried out by A's social worker. Within 24 hours the social worker had discussed and clarified the situation with the Carers Team. The Carers Team had also emailed C to advise that they had been under a mistaken impression the previous day and to request that C contact them to progress C's request. Relations between C and the Carers Team broke down during further email correspondence involving C, the Carers Team and the social worker the same day. Within this correspondence the Carers Team had made clear that they required further information from C to progress C's request and that they would end consideration of C's request if they had not received a response from C.

The partnership responded to a complaint from C, and accepted that there had been short comings in the Carers Team's communication with C and stated that the social worker would contact C to discuss carer support further. Some time later, a further referral for carer support was submitted to the Carers Team. Relations between the Carers Team and C again broke down and C submitted a complaint about the Carers Team's actions and the partnership's failure to provide carer support.

The partnership's response outlined their view of events regarding C's requests for carer support over a period. The partnership gave their view that C had not received carer support during this period because it had been unclear what supports C wished to access. The partnership accepted that there appeared to have been some confusion on the part of their staff as to who was ultimately responsible for moving forward with the matter and that this may have caused some delay. Given this, the partnership partially upheld C's specific complaint about this. The partnership noted that matters were now being progressed via the social worker and considered that, in those circumstances, there was no further resolution that they could offer.

C raised their complaint with SPSO shortly after receiving the partnership's response. We took independent advice from a social work adviser. We found that there had been confusion between the social worker and the Carers Team about who would provide C with support and that this led to a delay. On balance, we upheld the complaint on this basis. The partnership had already acknowledged this delay but had not provided a direct and clear apology to C for this or taken steps to ensure that the situation could not recur. We made recommendations to address these matters and provided feedback to the partnership.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for the confusion on the part of partnership staff that caused some of the delay in the provision of carer support to C. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets).

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- The partnership review and update their internal protocols, process flows and triage systems for carers assessments to ensure clarity, for staff and the public, regarding what staff are ultimately responsible for moving forward requests for carers support in a given circumstance.

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.