

Case: 201103489, Scottish Ambulance Service
Sector: health
Subject: incident reporting; complaints handling
Outcome: some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about an accident she had while being transported by the Scottish Ambulance Service (the service) to a clinic appointment. Ms C said that the driver had taken his finger from the remote-control button operating a stair-lift while Ms C was sitting on it in a wheelchair. The lift stopped suddenly and the driver fell against Ms C, who was thrown forward and to the right. She was injured by a bar at the front of the stair-lift.

Ms C said that the driver was speaking to someone else, lost concentration and took his finger off the button. The driver, however, said that he had slipped on the stairs. There was no doubt that the driver's finger came off the button but as there was no objective evidence to explain exactly how this happened, we could not uphold this complaint.

Ms C also complained that the driver then left her at the clinic reception and did not report the incident. She had to report it herself. The evidence confirmed that although the driver reported the incident to his own management, he did not report it to the clinic staff or any other hospital staff member. He apologised to Ms C and asked how she was, but did not take any action to ensure that someone attended to her. We upheld this complaint. We noted, however, that the service had provided evidence that the driver's line manager had addressed this and reminded him of his responsibilities in dealing with such incidents in the future. We, therefore, made no recommendations.

Ms C's final complaint was that the response she received from the service was inaccurate as it referred to the driver slipping on the stair and also that he had reported the incident to the clinic reception. There was no conclusive evidence to establish whether or not the driver slipped, but the service acknowledged that the driver had not reported the incident to hospital staff. We, therefore, upheld this complaint and made a recommendation.

Recommendation

We recommended that the service:

- apologise to Ms C for the failings identified.