

SPSO decision report

Case: 201303876, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained on behalf of his wife (Mrs C) and his son (Mr A) that the mental health care and treatment the board provided was inadequate. In particular, he said that after being placed on the waiting list, the board delayed in providing his wife with a mental health assessment, cancelled this meeting without explanation and that the replacement meeting (and others) were not specific to her needs. He also said that they did not provide Mr A with the psychiatric support he needed and that, despite a number of appointments, they failed to get to the root of his problems and provide a proper diagnosis. The board, however, said that Mr A did not have a mental illness. Mr C also said that the board had released confidential information about the complaint to Mr A, and failed to deal properly with all of his complaints.

In investigating this complaint, we carefully considered all the complaints correspondence and relevant medical records. We obtained independent advice from a consultant forensic psychiatrist, which we also took into account.

Our investigation found that there was a delay in providing Mrs C with psychological treatment. The eventual appointment was then cancelled without explanation, and replaced by a form of treatment about which Mrs C had no input. Our adviser said that the way the treatment was carried out was not patient focused and did not appear to have any benefit.

During the same period of time, Mr A was provided with reasonable care and treatment. A thorough assessment was completed and an appropriate treatment plan was established. However, Mr A was given information about correspondence from Mr C without Mr C's permission. When Mr C complained about this, the board delayed in dealing with his complaint, contrary to their stated complaints handling process.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- make a further apology to Mrs C for the failures our investigation identified;
- emphasise to relevant staff that the treatments they offer to patients should be patient centred and take the patient's (and carer's) views into account in providing this care and treatment;
- emphasise to relevant staff that psychological interventions should follow an established model to ensure focus;
- emphasise to staff concerned the importance of seeking appropriate permission before releasing 'third party' information;
- apologise to Mr C for their shortcomings; and
- emphasise to staff the importance of following their complaints procedure.