

SPSO decision report

Case: 201400585, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C's wife (Mrs C) suffered from severe liver disease, and was admitted to, and discharged from, the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh three times in a three-month period. Shortly after her last discharge, Mrs C was admitted to the Western General Hospital, where she passed away about a week later. Mr C complained to us about a number of aspects of his late wife's nursing and medical care in the first hospital. He said that the multiple discharges showed that doctors were not really interested in getting to the bottom of what was going on, they just wanted to get Mrs C a little better and send her home. He also complained about medical care during the first few days of Mrs C's admission to the second hospital, when he said she was moved to a side room where he believed she was forgotten about.

After taking independent nursing and medical advice, we did not uphold Mr C's complaints. Our nursing adviser considered that the overall nursing care in the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh was reasonable, and found no evidence of the specific issues Mr C raised. Our medical adviser said that Mrs C's medical care was also reasonable, and explained that her experience of multiple admissions to hospital was typical for a person in her condition. The medical adviser also found evidence that Mrs C was regularly reviewed and received reasonable care during her first few days at the Western General Hospital. As during our investigation we noted that the board had not responded to Mr C's complaints properly, we drew this to their attention.