

SPSO decision report

Case: 201401609, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about delays in diagnosing and treating her late daughter (Ms A)'s secondary cancer. She also complained that the board failed to appropriately communicate with her daughter and that they had found it difficult to contact someone from the breast cancer team.

We took independent medical advice from a consultant clinical oncologist (cancer specialist) and found that, while there were some short delays, these did not impact on Ms A's clinical outcome. Our adviser said that the secondary cancer Ms A developed was extremely rare and behaved very aggressively. We did not uphold this complaint, as we were satisfied that the team responsible for Ms A's care had responded compassionately, accurately and with due speed.

We upheld Mrs C's complaint about the board's communication, and we pointed out the importance of patients being clear about how to contact the breast cancer team. The board had apologised that their contact process was not fully explained to Mrs C and her family, and had taken action to review their communication channels and processes with a view to identifying how they could improve contact for patients.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- report back to us on the outcome of the review being carried out into communication channels and processes, with particular reference to information that is available about where other sources of support can be found.