

SPSO decision report

Case: 201702016, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Decision: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late father (Mr A) at the Glasgow Royal Infirmary. Miss C also complained about communication between the hospital staff and Mr A and his family.

Mr A was seen by the ear, nose and throat department due to having an ongoing hoarse voice and was subsequently referred to the respiratory department. Mr A was started on medication to treat tuberculosis (a bacterial infection mainly affecting the lungs). Mr A was later admitted to hospital due to shortness of breath and it was found he did not have tuberculosis, but lymphoma (a type of cancer). Miss C complained that the board did not consider other possible diagnoses and this resulted in a delay in reaching the correct diagnosis of lymphoma. Miss C also had concerns that the consultants involved in her father's care did not fully take into account his inability to eat properly and the effect this may have had on his existing diabetes.

We took independent advice from a consultant respiratory physician. We found that it was reasonable and appropriate to consider tuberculosis as the most likely diagnosis, and that this was in line with national guidance. The advice we received is that the consultants were open to alternative diagnoses, and that they reasonably took into account the effect of his illness on his diabetic control. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of Miss C's complaint.

Miss C complained about communication between the hospital staff and Mr A and his family. We noted that the board had acknowledged and apologised that communication was not of a good standard, and they had discussed this with the relevant staff to determine how this matter could be improved. We upheld this complaint, but found that the board had appropriately taken action on this matter and therefore did not make any further recommendations.