

SPSO decision report

Case: 201803249, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the treatment which he received when he attended the Western General Hospital for reported left upper abdomen pain. He said he had advised staff that he was allergic to aspirin and penicillin but was prescribed diclofenac medication (pain relief) on discharge. When he returned home, Mr C took two further diclofenac tablets and experienced breathing difficulties. He attended his GP the following day who prescribed alternative pain relief. Given his allergies, he felt that the diclofenac should not have been prescribed.

We took independent medical advice from a consultant. We found that although diclofenac would not normally be prescribed for a patient allergic to aspirin it was not absolutely contraindicated and should be used with caution. We also found that diclofenac was a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication (NSAID) and Mr C had advised the staff that he was able to tolerate some NSAIDs. We noted that Mr C had been given diclofenac whilst in hospital and that it had a good effect on his reported abdomen pain and he was given advice to seek further medical attention should his condition deteriorate following discharge. On balance, we found that it was reasonable for the doctor to have prescribed the diclofenac. We did not uphold Mr C's complaint.