

SPSO decision report

Case: 201806790, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment provided to her late husband (Mr A) who had a rare and aggressive form of bladder cancer. Mr A received care and treatment at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and the Western General Hospital.

We took independent advice from urology (specialism that deals with the male and female urinary tract, and the male reproductive organs), oncology (cancer) and general surgery advisers. We found that the time taken to investigate and begin treatment for Mr A's bladder cancer was reasonable and in accordance with the Scottish Government's cancer waiting time targets. We also found that chemotherapy treatment commenced within a reasonable timescale. The level of information about treatment options, including their risks and benefits, provided to Mr A was also reasonable. This included sufficient information about the specific risk of pulmonary embolism (a clot in the blood vessel that transports blood from the heart to the lungs), a complication Mr A subsequently experienced.

In the context of Mr A's rapid deterioration, the level of planning for end of life care was reasonable. When Mr A subsequently experienced bowel obstruction, it was reasonable that he was treated on a surgical ward. While Mr A's pain was difficult to manage, the attempts by the clinical team were reasonable, as was the aim to discharge Mr A home. When Mr A's condition deteriorated, he was transferred to a hospice without unreasonable delay.

We did not uphold Mrs C's complaints.