

SPSO decision report

Case: 201808264, Inverclyde Health and Social Care Partnership
Sector: Health and Social Care
Subject: continuing care
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C, a support and advocacy worker, raised a complaint on behalf of her client (Mr A) about the support he had received from the community mental health team and in particular about access to services and communication. We took independent advice from a mental health nursing adviser. We found that a number of aspects of the support Mr A received was reasonable. However, we also found that there was a delay in offering support over one weekend. We noted that this delay had not placed Mr A at risk and he had been contacted by phone. We found that Mr A expressed reservations about seeing clinicians of a particular gender but these were not properly acknowledged and explored by the clinical team caring for him.

We also found that there were failings in relation to the notice given to Mr A about staff sickness/absence. We noted that this failing had been accepted by the partnership. The partnership had also accepted that there was evidence of an incident where a service was not made available due to a family connection between staff and patient.

Finally, we also found failings in relation to the management/allocation of out-patient appointments.

Given the failings identified, we upheld the complaint and made recommendations. However, we noted that the partnership had already taken some action to remedy these failings and asked for evidence of this.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr A for the failings identified in this case. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Phone messages from patients should be recorded and passed on. Also patients should be timeously notified when scheduled appointments require to be rearranged for unforeseen organisational reasons and decisions taken by clinical teams to arrange or reschedule appointments should be actioned in an appropriate and timely manner.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.