

SPSO decision report

Case: 201907379, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division
Sector: Health
Subject: Appointments / Admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about delays in treatment that was meant to be provided to their late spouse (A). They told us that A had been referred to the board from another area for heart surgery, but that this took so long to arrange, A's condition deteriorated to a point that surgery was no longer viable and they subsequently died. C was also concerned about the board's handling of their complaints about the matter.

We took independent advice from a cardiology consultant (a specialist in diseases and abnormalities of the heart). We found that, while there were delays in arranging scans, these were the responsibility of the board in A's home area, so Lothian NHS Board could not be said to be responsible for this.

With regards to C's concerns about complaints handling, we found that the board's approach had been reasonable, with appropriately empathetic language used throughout and regular updates provided.

Given these points, we did not uphold C's complaints.