

SPSO decision report

Case: 202210503, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided to their spouse (A). A had been diagnosed with lung cancer and were due to start treatment. A had become unwell overnight and attended the A&E twice in 24 hours. At the first attendance A had been examined but sent home. A's condition had worsened, and they had been taken back to the A&E by paramedics. A had been examined and then admitted to hospital but died shortly after.

C believed that A's first assessment was inadequate, and that their concerns about pneumonia were dismissed unreasonably. They felt strongly that had A been given antibiotics and admitted, they might have had a better outcome. C believed that on A's second attendance, A's cancer specialists should have been contacted sooner.

We took independent advice from an emergency medicine adviser. We found that A's assessments were reasonable and that it was unlikely that the outcome would have been different had A been prescribed antibiotics or admitted sooner. We did not uphold the complaint.