

SPSO decision report

Case: 201503949, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: communication / staff attitude / dignity / confidentiality
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care given to her late husband (Mr C) while he was a patient in Wishaw General Hospital. Mr C had Parkinson's Disease and dementia and had been admitted to hospital for a period of assessment. Mrs C said that between his admission to hospital and his discharge to a care home (a period of several months), she was not properly consulted on his treatment plans, nor was she appropriately involved in multi-disciplinary meetings to discuss his care. She said that this was even although she had welfare power of attorney which allowed her to look after Mr C's interests (to consent to his treatment) as he no longer had capacity to do this.

While Mrs C had raised her concerns with the board, they had indicated to her that Mr C had been cared for appropriately but they apologised if she felt his nursing care had been poor.

We took independent advice from a senior mental health professional and we found that Mr C's care plan had been inadequate. There had been a particular omission with regard to his personal care. There was no evidence that in the absence of Mr C's participation and agreement that Mrs C as power of attorney had been involved. Similarly, Mrs C was not as involved as she should have been in decisions about her husband's care and treatment and her involvement in multi-disciplinary meetings was inconsistent and sporadic. For these reasons we upheld her complaint about this.

Although Mrs C had also complained that Mr C's medication regime was changed inappropriately, we found no evidence of this.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- make a formal apology to recognise their failures with regard to care planning;
- ensure that all care plan templates are completed in full in relation to keyworker/patient/carer involvement and that they are appropriately signed and dated, and demonstrate to us that this has been done;
- make a formal apology to Mrs C for the fact that she was not involved in multi-disciplinary meetings as was appropriate; and
- ensure that staff involved in Mr C's care are reminded of the importance of ensuring that carers with power of attorney are fully and appropriately included in decision-making.