

SPSO decision report

Case: 201100404, Fife NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment that her husband (Mr C) received from the board before his death from cancer. She said that they had delayed in removing a lump from Mr C's groin. We found that it was unreasonable for Mr C to have to wait for nearly six weeks for the surgery after the decision was made to remove the lump. We also found that the surgeon should have contacted an oncologist to discuss Mr C instead of waiting to discuss the case at a multidisciplinary meeting.

The surgeon had acknowledged that he would have preferred to operate sooner, but carried out the operation as soon as was possible. The board also told us that they had reorganised services within the department to increase the amount of theatre time available to cancer surgeons. They also said that they had reviewed their outpatient clinics so that greater time could be spent with these patients. In view of this, we did not make any recommendations.

Mrs C also complained that the board discharged Mr C from hospital inappropriately. We received medical advice that Mr C appeared to be fit for discharge, although the records in relation to this could have been clearer. We also found that the surgeon had communicated with Mr C and his medical practice in a satisfactory manner. These aspects of the complaint were not upheld.