

SPSO decision report

Case: 201201466, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C, who is paralysed from the neck down, complained that the board unreasonably and without prior consultation proposed to change some elements of the nursing care they provide.

Our investigation, which included taking independent nursing advice, found that Mr C had been cared for by the same two nurses for much of the last 20 years. During this time their practices had changed little, which meant they were not in keeping with current good practice. Our nursing adviser, therefore, felt it was reasonable for the board to have taken the opportunity to review Mr C's care package when one of the long standing nurses retired and the team leader changed. The team leader had phoned Mr C to discuss the proposed changes, but the conversation did not go well. Mr C, therefore, felt that, rather than a discussion with him about his future care, the changes were imposed upon him. The board acknowledged that it would have been better for this conversation to have taken place face-to-face and have put this change into place for such discussions in the future.

After this, following 'moving and handling' training for the staff, it was apparent that no moving and handling assessment had taken place for a number of years. During a routine visit by two staff Mr C took exception to the way that they wanted to use a 'sliding sheet' (used to ease the moving of a patient from bed). He became upset and asked the staff to leave before the procedure he was to receive was completed. A moving and handling assessment was arranged but again this did not go well and Mr C asked the staff to leave his home. He has not received nursing care from the board since the end of September 2011.

We did not uphold Mr C's complaints, as our investigation found that the actions of the board and their staff had been reasonable. We noted that in responding to the complaints, the board offered Mr C a meeting with their associate nurse director to discuss his future care. Although at the time Mr C did not feel able to take up this offer, it remains open and we have encouraged him to take this up when he feels able to do so.