

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201202196, Lanarkshire NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** policy/administration  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C's mother (Mrs A) was admitted to a hospital accident and emergency department (A&E). In the resuscitation room three gold necklaces were removed from Mrs A, along with other jewellery which was handed to her family immediately. Mrs A was then transferred to another ward, where she passed away. On collecting Mrs A's personal belongings, her family discovered that the necklaces were missing. The A&E department was searched, with the family present, and other departments were contacted but the necklaces were not found.

Mrs A's family complained to the hospital about the loss of the necklaces. In their response, the board accepted that the necklaces had been lost there and noted that the usual procedure of sealing belongings in a bag and giving them to the patient or next of kin had not happened on this occasion, advised that the importance of documenting and caring for patients' belongings had been reiterated to staff and that new labels and a belongings register had been provided in the A&E department. The board expressed their regret at the distress that had been caused and offered their sincere apologies to the family.

Ms C was dissatisfied with this response and complained to us. We decided that the board's response had been reasonable, and did not uphold that complaint. She had made other complaints relating to the loss of the necklaces and the board's investigation, but we could not consider these as they had not yet completed the board's complaints procedures.