

SPSO decision report

Case: 201400985, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that her husband (Mr C), who suffered from multiple sclerosis, had received inadequate care and treatment from the District Nursing Team. He had developed a pressure ulcer on his back, and Mrs C said she believed that had she not insisted her husband phone his GP, then the pressure ulcers would have continued to deteriorate. Mrs C said that when he examined the pressure ulcer, the GP had been surprised at how bad it was, and her husband had been admitted for hospital treatment. Mr C had spent an extended period in hospital with a serious infection, which she attributed to the poor care he had received at home.

The board said that the nurses treating Mr C had made a number of suggestions to him that would have helped to treat his pressure ulcer, but he had refused them. The board said that successful treatment of pressure ulcers was dependent on the patient following the advice of staff, and that treatment would be limited if this did not happen. Nurses had attempted to obtain a medical opinion prior to Mrs C's contact with the GP, but Mr C had refused this.

We took independent advice from our nursing adviser, who said that the nursing record was appropriately completed and showed that a good standard of wound care had been provided. The adviser said that the wound had improved at times and then deteriorated, and it was reasonable for the nurses to persist with home treatment. Our investigation found that on the basis of the advice received, Mr C had been provided with a reasonable standard of care and treatment.