

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201508346, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** not upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained about various aspects of the nursing care she received during an admission to the Royal Alexandra Hospital. This included her concerns about the assistance she received with her personal care, the attitude of staff and the management of her pain.

We took independent nursing advice. The adviser found no evidence to support Mrs C's concerns and considered that the overall nursing care she received appeared reasonable. Therefore we did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.

However, while reasonable efforts appeared to have been made to manage Mrs C's pain, it was noted that she had been refusing pain medication and the nursing adviser considered that staff might have done more to explore the reasons for this with Mrs C. In addition, we considered that some of the language used in the nursing records could be viewed as lacking compassion. We made a recommendation in this regard.

Mrs C also complained about her medical care as she considered that she received inadequate sedation before an attempt to carry out a lumbar puncture (a procedure where a needle is inserted into the lower part of the spine). This initial attempt was abandoned due to Mrs C's distress and the procedure was carried out successfully the following day. We took independent advice from a consultant physician, who considered that the procedure was carried out appropriately and that reasonable steps were taken to try to control Mrs C's pain. They advised that it would be unusual and not in line with routine practice to offer sedation to patients for such a procedure. We did not uphold this complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- ensure that the staff involved are made aware of, and reflect on, the nursing adviser's comments.