

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508629, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained to us about the care and treatment provided to her late father (Mr A) in Western General Hospital and St John's Hospital.

We took independent advice from a consultant physician and a nurse. Though we found Mr A's medical treatment reasonable, we identified a number of other concerns. In particular, we found that communication of Mr A's prognosis was not carried out reasonably with Mr A or his family. We also had concerns about the adequacy of record-keeping by nursing staff in relation to Mr A's stay in St John's Hospital. We were also concerned that no arrangements had been put in place for a member of Mr A's family to travel with him in the ambulance when he was transferred from St John's Hospital to hospice care.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- apologise for the failure to properly communicate with Mr A and his family with regards to his prognosis and who his consultant was;
- take steps to ensure communication between staff and families is properly documented;
- ensure that relevant staff are made aware of our comments in relation to communication of prognosis;
- take steps to ensure complete daily nursing records are properly kept at all times;
- apologise for the failure to properly document nursing care provided to Mr A; and
- consider putting in place specific guidelines for allowing family members to travel alongside patients in ambulances.