

SPSO decision report

Case: 201600029, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained that a blood test that can detect heart damage was not carried out on her son (Mr A) when he attended A&E at Glasgow Royal Infirmary. Mrs C said she made the ambulance crew aware of an extensive family history of heart trouble and that they indicated that, in the circumstances, the blood test would be carried out. However, Mr A was discharged later the same day without the test having been carried out. He died just over three weeks later as a result of a problem with his heart.

The board noted that the ambulance record described Mr A's presenting complaint as non-traumatic back pain. They found no evidence that Mr A had not received appropriate treatment in light of his presenting symptoms.

We took independent medical advice from an emergency medicine consultant, who noted from the records that hospital staff requested and recorded appropriate information. The adviser considered that reasonable action was taken in response to this and that sufficient symptoms, or other factors, did not exist to prompt the blood test to be carried out. It was noted that the ambulance record did not document a family history of heart trouble and, when Mr A was asked about this, an extensive history was not given. We therefore did not conclude that the blood test was unreasonably omitted and did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.