

SPSO decision report

Case: 201705277, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C, who works for an advocacy and support service, complained to us on behalf of her client (Ms A) who had concerns that she was inappropriately discharged from the community mental health team (CMHT) following a single consultation with a community psychiatric nurse (CPN). Ms A felt that, as she suffered from depression, she would require on-going professional clinical support. However, the CPN told her that the depression was caused by external situational and societal factors and gave her information on stress control classes, depression management, self help websites, advice regarding job seeking and training, and advice on money matters. Ms C complained that Ms A was unreasonably discharged from the CMHT service.

We took independent advice from a mental health adviser and concluded that the CPN had appropriately assessed that Ms A's mental health status was influenced by a range of social, economic and environmental factors. We found that it was appropriate that the CPN gave Ms A information on support options such as non-medical groups, websites and other resources, which is sometimes referred to as social prescribing. This allows the opportunity to address people's needs in a holistic way rather than resorting to unnecessary medication remedies or clinical solutions which could be disproportionate in relation to the patient's needs. The CPN had also advised Ms A that should her symptoms deteriorate then she should contact her GP who could make a further referral to the service. We found this to be reasonable and we did not uphold the complaint.