

SPSO decision report

Case: 201908284, Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C attended Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary (DGRI) for a colonoscopy (a procedure where a camera on the end of a flexible tube is inserted into the rectum). During this procedure, polyps (tissue growths) were found and biopsies (a sample of tissue) were taken. C was told that a polyp showed possible signs of cancer. A second colonoscopy was carried out and the doctor attempted to remove the polyp, however the procedure was painful and was stopped. C was discharged home the next day.

Soon after, C had a bloody bowel movement and went to Galloway Community Hospital where they were then transferred to DGRI. C collapsed and was resuscitated, given a blood transfusion and moved to critical care.

C complained that the colonoscopy was not carried out properly, that it was painful and asked whether it should have been done in the first place. C also complained about the decision to transfer them from Galloway Community Hospital to DGRI and about the care they received on arrival at hospital.

We took independent advice from a consultant gastroenterologist (a physician who specialises in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the stomach and intestines). We considered that the colonoscopy procedure was required as there was evidence C might have cancer. We noted that pain is subjective and the amount of pain relief given to C may not have been sufficient, although it was the recommended dosage. We found that the procedure appeared to have been carried out appropriately.

We also considered that the decision to transfer C from Galloway Community Hospital to DGRI was reasonable. It was possible that C would need surgical intervention which was only available at DGRI. We found that C was promptly assessed and was treated appropriately following their collapse. We did not uphold C's complaints.