

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 202204103, Tayside NHS Board  
**Sector:** Health  
**Subject:** Admission / discharge / transfer procedures  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided to their adult child (A). C complained that actions taken shortly before and after A's discharges were unreasonable as was the board's response to the complaint.

We took independent advice from a consultant in general medicine and a registered general nurse. We found that appropriate assessments were carried out prior to discharge and that the board reasonably discharged A. As such, we did not uphold these parts of C's complaint.

We considered C's complaint regarding the level of support offered after A's falls. We found that the board's response to these falls were reasonable. Action taken after the fall in the car park were in line with policy and the level of staffing available on the day, and in relation to the fall while being admitted, the care as documented was considered to be reasonable. As such, we did not uphold these parts of C's complaint.

In relation to the complaints handling, we found that there were failings in the response to C's verbal and written complaints, with no response issued to the verbal complaint, and not providing a full response to the written complaint. While there were some aspects of the board's response which were reasonable, overall we upheld this part of C's complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for failing to reasonably respond to the complaints regarding A's discharges and the response to A's fall in the car park. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets).

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- All staff must be aware of the complaints handling procedure and how to handle and record complaints at the early resolution stage.
- Complainants should be advised prior to the deadline if the board will not meet the 20 working day target for responding to a complaint, and be advised of the reasons for the delay.
- Responses to complaints should be clear and answer the points of concern raised.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.