

SPSO decision report

Case: 202300640, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about a mis-diagnosis of their parent (A) at hospital. C noted that A was diagnosed with pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) during their first admission. A CT scan was taken to confirm this diagnosis. During a later second admission, blood tests and an ultrasound were taken but no CT scan was taken and pancreatitis was again confirmed. A then attended a different hospital while away. A CT scan was taken and A was diagnosed with late stage pancreatic cancer and died shortly after. C complained that the pancreatic cancer had not been diagnosed at the original hospital. The board explained that the original scans confirmed pancreatitis and showed an abnormality which increased the risk of it recurring. During A's second admission, blood tests confirmed acute pancreatitis and there were no clinical signs to indicate that a further CT scan should be arranged.

We took independent advice from a gastroenterology (a doctor specialising in the treatment of conditions affecting the liver, intestine and pancreas) adviser. We found that the care and treatment was appropriate throughout the period and that there was no reason to suspect pancreatic cancer. In their second admission, A's presentation was consistent with an attack of mild acute pancreatitis and immediate further CT scanning was not indicated at this time. As such the complaint was not upheld.