

## December 2021

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As 2021 draws to a close, we would like to wish everyone a peaceful festive season, and all the best for a happy and healthy New Year.

### Festive opening hours

Please note that for most business we will be closed from 12 noon on Friday 24 December 2021, reopening on Wednesday 5 January 2022.

Public service complaints can still be submitted via our [online complaint form](#) and INWO complaints can be submitted via the [INWO online complaint form](#). We won't be able to respond until we reopen on 5 January 2022.

**Our Scottish Welfare Fund team will offer an emergency service on 29-31 December 2021.**

## Our findings

### Complaints

This month we:

- published 16 decision reports available [here](#)
- upheld 11 complaints in full or part
- made 26 recommendations for learning and improvement.

### *Investigation report*

In addition to our decision summaries, this month we are publishing one full investigation report: [201905973 Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board](#) relating to the care and treatment of a patient who developed a haematoma and a subsequent cardiorespiratory arrest following surgery to their neck for cancer. The patient was left with mobility and speech difficulties and seizures.

We found that, while a secondary haemorrhage is a known complication of the surgery, the board did not follow the protocol correctly when evacuating the haematoma. The haematoma remained present for 90 minutes after it was first identified when it should have been evacuated as quickly as possible. If this had been done, it would have most likely prevented the patient's cardiorespiratory arrest that led to the hypoxic brain injury and seizures. We also found that the board did not ensure that family members were fully aware that a Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR) had been put in place.

We also investigated the nursing care and treatment that the patient received but found this to be reasonable.

We asked the board to apologise to the patient and their family, and ensure staff are aware of the protocols and guidance surrounding postoperative haemorrhage and resuscitation.

## Scottish Welfare Fund reviews

### *Statistics*

During November we:

- responded to 137 enquiries
- made 114 decisions
  - 19 community care grants
  - 66 crisis grants
  - 29 self-isolation support grants
- upheld nine (47%) community care grants, eight (12%) crisis grants and 13 (45%) self-isolation support grants
- referred six self-isolation support grants back to the council to reconsider their decision. These were largely linked to data sharing and consent issues concerning Test and Protect notification, and the information had not been available to the council when they made their decision
- signposted an additional 185 applicants to other sources of assistance, the majority (140) of these were calling us instead of their local council.

### *Case studies*

In recent weeks, we have seen a number of applications where we assessed that the council did not interpret the available information correctly.

In one such case, the applicant (C) applied for money for food after stating that their money had been stolen during a serious assault. The council initially made an award then rescinded this on the basis that they could not verify that C had reported the assault to the police. At first tier review, the council did not change their decision as the applicant did not report the same version of events to the police as they did to the council.

We reviewed the council's file and spoke with C. C confirmed the nature of the assault and their reason for not reporting this to the police which matched with what they had told the council. The council notes confirmed that C had reported their money and bank card stolen but did not report the assault.

We assessed that the assault not being reported was irrelevant to the reason for C being in crisis as this was clearly because their money and bank card were stolen. We also took into account the severity and nature of the assault, and that C was still coming to terms with this and did not yet feel able to report this to the police. We made an on-balance assessment as per section 4.21 of the guidance as there was no inconsistencies in C's version of events and we had no reason to doubt what they said had happened.

We changed the council's decision and instructed them to make an award to C. We provided feedback that the council had incorrectly interpreted the information available to them. We also provided feedback to the council about their written communications, that they had not followed the guidance and that they had incorrectly calculated the award at initial decision.

Further examples can be found in the searchable directory [on our website](#).

## Training – open courses available

Our next open courses are available to book!

### Good Complaints Handling open course

This course is aimed at staff who deal with complaints at stage 1 of the Model Complaints Handling Procedure. It is trainer-led, approximately 2.5 hours long, and delivered via Webex:

- 22 January 2022 (9:30-12:00)

### Complaints Investigation Skills open course

This course is aimed at staff who investigate complaints at stage 2 of the Model Complaints Handling Procedure and will comprise of three trainer-led modules, each 2.5 hours long and delivered via Webex:

- Module 1 – 15 February 2022 (14:00-16:30)
- Module 2 – 17 February 2022 (09:30-12:00)
- Module 3 – 23 February 2022 (09:30-12:00)

For more information or how to book, please email [training@spsso.gov.scot](mailto:training@spsso.gov.scot). Further details can also be found on our [training webpage](#). Please note that these will be the last open courses for this business year.

## Independent National Whistleblowing Officer webinar

We are pleased to be able to share the date of our next webinar, which will focus on providing information for union reps: **Wednesday 2 February 2022, from 14:30-15:30.**

We are working with union reps to develop a webinar that addresses the issues and concerns that reps may have as they navigate the Standards and inform their members. It will be an ideal opportunity for reps (and others if they are interested) in hearing about the Standards, how to support their members to access them, and what the process means for them and their members.

To register your interest please email [INWO@spsso.gov.scot](mailto:INWO@spsso.gov.scot).

### *INWO e-bulletins*

Our INWO team sends out regular updates with further information about the service. [Our December e-bulletin can be found here.](#)

If you would like to receive future e-bulletins from the INWO straight to your inbox, please [register here to sign up to the mailing list](#).



## COVID-19 information

As lockdown restrictions have not been lifted, our office remains closed and our service provision is not changing, with most of our staff continuing to work from home.

Please read our [website for more service information](#), such as operating hours of our Freephone advice line.

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For further information contact:

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