

Case: 201103309, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: lists; complaints handling
Outcome: some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that his medical practice inappropriately asked the local health board to remove him from their list of patients. He said that the practice did not give him an adequate reason for this, and simply told him to contact the board for further information. He was also unhappy about the practice's handling of his complaints.

We upheld most of Mr C's complaints. The National Health Service (General Medical Services Contracts) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 outline the procedure to be followed when a practice wishes to remove a patient from their list of patients. The British Medical Association and the General Medical Council have also provided guidance on this. The practice told us that their relationship with Mr C had broken down. However, we found that they did not issue him with a warning as outlined in the regulations. The practice also failed to explain his removal from their list. It was not appropriate that they told him to contact the board about this - it was up to the practice to explain why he was removed.

Our investigation also found that the practice's complaints procedure was out of date when Mr C complained, and that they had made inappropriate comments in their response. We did not, however, uphold Mr C's complaint that the practice took too long to deal with the matter. They issued a response as soon as they received a copy of his letter from the board.

We noted that, before Mr C complained to us, the board had arranged a meeting between him and the practice. At the meeting, the practice apologised for their failings and outlined the steps they had taken to prevent similar complaints.

Recommendation

We recommended that the practice:

- issue a written apology to Mr C for: their failures in relation to him being removed from their list; the fact that their complaints procedure was out of date; and the inappropriate comments about other patients being placed at unnecessary risk in their response to his complaint.