

Case: 201004906, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about his treatment in hospital after a knee replacement operation. He said that he developed an infection and had to attend hospital for some time after his surgery. He felt that if the consultant who operated on him had investigated the infection sooner, then it might have been contained or eradicated. He said that the board failed to adequately treat his ongoing problems of pain or to adequately investigate his complaint.

The evidence in the clinical records showed that Mr C's follow-up reviews and treatments were held in good time. We took the advice of our medical adviser, who said that prosthetic knee replacement infections can be difficult to diagnose and that there was no evidence that the clinical judgements made were unreasonable. We found no evidence to support Mr C's view that the board failed to adequately treat his pain. There was also no evidence that the follow-up care was inadequate or fell short of the clinical standards expected.

We also found that the board responded appropriately to Mr C's complaint. They addressed and answered his questions; demonstrated empathy with his situation; and kept him updated about how their investigation was progressing.

Although Mr C was unhappy with the investigation, we took the view that, to answer his questions and concerns, it was appropriate for the board to initially refer these to the consultant for comment. This is common and acceptable practice when responding to a complaint. We recognise that Mr C is still dissatisfied with the responses he received, but dissatisfaction with the outcome of a complaint does not mean that the board did anything wrong.