

Case: 201101678, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: policy/administration
Outcome: upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C had fertility treatment which began in 2008. She had a successful pregnancy in 2009 and in 2011 was invited back for further treatment. On attending the appointment, she was advised there had been an administrative error, and she should not have been invited for further treatment as she had already had a child. Mrs C complained that she was never told that this would be the case. The board considered whether to make an exception to the criteria for treatment in Mrs C's case, but decided there was no basis to deviate from them.

The board explained that, under their policy, couples were entitled to a maximum of two cycles of treatment. Mrs C had become pregnant during the first cycle. She had frozen embryos remaining from that cycle, which were implanted in 2010 but did not result in a further pregnancy. The board said this was the stage at which the first cycle of treatment ended, and Mrs C was not entitled to a second cycle of NHS treatment as she had already had a child as a result of the first.

We found that the correspondence sent to Mrs C about the criteria for treatment had not been clear. On that basis we upheld her complaint. We made no recommendations as we found that, as a result of Mrs C's case, the board had undertaken a range of measures to prevent a similar error happening again. These included reviewing the correspondence sent to patients, developing a new consent form and ensuring that review meetings took all previous treatment outcomes for patients into account.