

Case: 201102662, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis

Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about cataract surgery carried out by a trainee surgeon. During the operation the iris of his eye was damaged. Mr C's concerns were that he had not been advised that a trainee surgeon was to carry out the surgery and that it was not appropriate for a trainee to have done so.

We took advice from one of our medical advisers who is a consultant ophthalmologist. We did not uphold the complaint that it was inappropriate for the trainee, an experienced cataract surgeon who had nearly completed their training, to have carried out the operation. This is normal practice and there was adequate supervision. However, before the surgery took place, Mr C should have been told of the possibility that the surgeon might be a trainee. As he was only told that the doctor who operated might be a different doctor from the consultant he had been seeing, we upheld this complaint.

Recommendation

We recommended that the board:

- take steps to make patients aware that procedures could be carried out by trainee staff under supervision. This advice could be incorporated in a patient information leaflet, consent form, or documented in the patient's records.