

SPSO decision report

Case: 201103727, Orkney NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C made a number of complaints about her GP's handling of her healthcare. She said that the GP did not fully investigate or appropriately refer her to investigate and treat her health issues. She also complained about staff attitude in relation to a cervical cancer screening programme. In addition, Ms C was unhappy with the board's handling of her complaints, as she felt they had not addressed the issues she had raised.

We reviewed all Ms C's correspondence and obtained background correspondence and copy medical records from the board. We also took advice from one of our medical advisers. The practice concerned is administered by the health board on one of Scotland's outer islands. Therefore, the responsibility for investigating the complaints fell to the board although the GP had responded directly to Ms C on the majority of the issues. The remaining issues concerned nursing care and were investigated by the board's primary care manager.

We did not uphold Ms C's complaints. Our investigation found that all of the issues she raised had been addressed, although she did not in the end receive a detailed letter of response from the board itself. This is because due to the nature and volume of Ms C's correspondence with the board, they invoked their 'Unreasonably Demanding or Persistent Complainant Policy'. This says that once the policy has been invoked the board will not respond to further correspondence unless it raises completely new issues.

We found that the GP's treatment and management of Ms C's various medical conditions was reasonable. All relevant investigations and referrals were made in an appropriate and timely manner. Overall, our adviser described the GP's management of Ms C's case as holistic and clinically sound. Similarly, there was no evidence to suggest that the care and treatment and attitude of the nurse was anything other than reasonable and appropriate.