

SPSO decision report

Case: 201103809, Tayside NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: policy/administration

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the board did not provide pelvic support girdles, which he considered his partner needed because of pelvic pain in pregnancy. We explained to him that our role in such complaints is limited because it is not for us to tell the NHS how to use their financial resources. Our role was solely to consider if the board's decision making had been flawed.

The board had taken a decision six years earlier not to provide these support belts because there was not enough likelihood of benefit. Our investigation found that the board had consulted various studies and European guidelines since then to ensure that the decision remained up-to-date. We concluded that this was appropriate decision making. Mr C had also been concerned that the decision seemed to be based on cost, rather than clinical need. However, health boards have to manage their resources carefully and are expected to reach decisions by considering factors such as a balance of cost and likely benefit. We considered it entirely reasonable for the board to take account of cost.