

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202059, Forth Valley NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: complaints handling
Outcome: no decision reached

Summary

Mr C, who is a prisoner, complained to the board about the medication decisions taken by his prison health centre. Mr C was not satisfied with their reply, which he felt had not addressed his concerns, and so he sent them a follow-up letter. However, the board sent it back to the health centre, unanswered, and the health centre gave it to him, with a note that advised him to follow the correct complaints process.

Mr C contacted us for help in getting a reply to his follow-up letter as he thought he had been following the process and did not know what to do.

Although initial complaints to health boards should go through the health centre, it is our view that follow-up letters may go direct to a board. If a board wish to ensure that the health centre knows what is happening, the board may tell the health centre about it themselves. But we take the view that it is not for a complainant to have to try to navigate a complaints system this way. We, therefore, sent Mr C's follow-up letter back to the board and asked them to reply to Mr C.

We told Mr C that we had closed his complaint while he and the board were dealing with it but that he could come back to this office after that if he thought the complaint should be investigated further.