

SPSO decision report

Case: 201203366, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the standard of care he had received in relation to a number of blood tests. He also complained about poor communication and the handling of his representations.

After taking independent advice from one of our medical advisers, we upheld the complaint about the blood tests. Although we found that the care and treatment Mr C received was reasonable, there was a lack of communication about the results of his blood tests. One of the tests that his GP had requested had not been taken, but Mr C was not told this and had continued to request the result. We also found that as Mr C had a low ASSIGN score (cardiovascular risk score - used to predict the likelihood of developing cardiovascular disease) some of the blood tests were unnecessary under the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN). We did not uphold the complaint about the board's response to Mr C's representations as we found that it was reasonable.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- clarify the system for improved and more timely communication of results by clinicians to patients; and
- ensure that medical officers familiarise themselves with SIGN 97 'Risk estimation and the prevention of cardiovascular disease' to ensure appropriate testing and treatment of patients based on their ASSIGN score.