

SPSO decision report

Case: 201204020, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

In 2007, Ms C had her right breast removed because of cancer. In 2012, her left breast was also removed as a preventative measure and at the same time, she underwent reconstructive surgery (breast implants). She was discharged from hospital but was re-admitted about a week later, and had to have necrotic (dead) skin removed, as well as her breast implants. She was discharged on the day that the presence of a bacterial infection was identified. Ms C's recovery has been slow and she complained that, in the circumstances of her case, she was discharged inappropriately.

The complaint was investigated, taking into account all the relevant information, including the complaints correspondence, and Ms C's medical records. We also obtained independent medical advice. We did not uphold Ms C's complaint as our investigation found that on both occasions it had been appropriate to discharge her. On the day of her first discharge, she was noted to be doing well and her wound was satisfactory. On the next occasion, there was no suggestion in the records that she had infection. She had already completed a course of antibiotics and was discharged with more. While it was noted that the circumstances experienced by Ms C were distressing in that she did suffer infection, lost her implants and suffered the trauma of poor wound healing, the advice received was that it had been appropriate to discharge her.