

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201204106, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1998. Due to the severity of the disease and her young age, she was given yearly mammograms (a special

x-ray picture of the breast) which she was told were to continue until she was 50.

Around eleven years after diagnosis, Mrs C moved to Scotland. She was given a mammogram in 2010. The following year, it was explained to her that the policy was for mammograms to be given every two years.

After her routine mammogram in 2012, Mrs C was told she had cancer in her right breast. She alleged that if she had been given a mammogram in 2011 as she had expected, and as she had requested, she would have learned of her condition at an earlier stage and the outcome would have been better for her.

In investigating the complaint, we considered all the available information, including the complaints correspondence and Mrs C's relevant clinical records. We also took independent advice from a medical adviser. The adviser said that there was a difference between screening and follow-up treatment.

Mrs C was being followed-up after illness and treatment. In the adviser's view, Mrs C should have continued having annual follow-ups until she was 50. She also said that Mrs C was in a special category as she also had a family history of breast cancer. The adviser did not consider that Mrs C's personal circumstances were taken into account when she was being treated. She noted, however, that the hospital's policy of two year mammograms met minimum required standards, and that annual mammograms from the age of 30 to 50 would be an extreme risk. The adviser said that she would have offered MRI scans rather than mammography. We upheld the complaint but, because of this advice, made no recommendations.