

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201300409, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** communication, staff attitude, dignity, confidentiality  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained about her care and treatment during the birth of her son. In particular, she was concerned about the attitude of the midwife - she said that the midwife had snapped at her, had not listened to her and had not explained what was happening. She was concerned that the actions of the midwife had almost cost her son's life.

Our investigation took into account all the available information, including the complaints correspondence and the relevant clinical records. We also obtained independent advice from a medical adviser. We found that the board had already accepted that there had been a failure in communication and had taken action to address this and had apologised to Ms C.

Overall we found that the level of care provided was adequate and safe and that there was nothing in the clinical records to suggest that a different course of action should have been taken. However, we were concerned that Ms C's blood pressure or pulse were not taken as required. We were also concerned that record-keeping was not to an acceptable standard, and that the failure in communication, in particular the failure to explain what was happening, had added to Ms C's concern that her baby was at risk. We upheld Ms C's complaint and made relevant recommendations.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- bring the failures identified in this investigation to the attention of the relevant midwife; and
- undertake an audit of record-keeping at the maternity unit to ensure that their record-keeping is in line with Nursing and Midwifery Council guidance.