

SPSO decision report

Case: 201303995, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that he did not have continuity of mental health care, as he had been seen by eleven different consultant psychiatrists. Mr C said this was frustrating for him, and caused him concern about whether he was receiving consistent care and treatment.

We looked at Mr C's medical records, and took independent advice from our mental health adviser. We also asked the board what they were doing to deal with staffing issues in community mental health. The board explained the reasons for the lack of consistency in staffing, and provided reassurance about the steps being taken to improve the situation. They also remedied Mr C's specific situation by placing him on the caseload of a senior member of staff.

Our adviser said that although there was a lack of consistency in the consultants who saw Mr C, there was no evidence in the medical records that his care and treatment were adversely affected in a significant way, or that there was a lack of continuity in his treatment. The standard of medical record-keeping and communication with his GP was reasonable, and ensured that important clinical information was appropriately passed on. Our adviser also said there had been greater consistency in terms of community psychiatric nursing provided, which helped offset any difficulties created by the problems with medical staffing.