

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201304775, Dumfries and Galloway NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** policy / administration  
**Outcome:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C, who had previously surrendered his driving licence for medical reasons, complained that a consultant at Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary delayed in writing a report for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Authority to confirm that he was medically fit to drive. Mr C also complained about the board's response to his complaint.

We found there was an unacceptable delay in writing the report in support of Mr C's licence application, and upheld this part of his complaint. The board explained that there was an administrative backlog, and that the report had to be written by a doctor (as opposed to an administrator). Mr C did not believe this because he was not told about the backlog when he spoke to his consultant's secretary. Our investigation established that there was a backlog, and that the report was something that only a doctor could deal with. The consultant had explained in an internal email that they could not easily delegate completion of the report, due to lack of medically qualified support.

While we took the view that it might have been helpful if the board had given Mr C some of this additional information, we did not uphold his complaint about their response, as we found that it was acceptable. The board also told us they would have expected Mr C to have been kept informed when there was a delay in replying. This did not happen, and the board did not tell us what they have done to stop this happening again. So, although we did not uphold that part of Mr C's complaint, we made a recommendation about this.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- ensure that relevant secretarial and administrative staff keep members of the public updated where there is a delay in dealing with correspondence.