

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201305709, Lothian NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained about a delay in diagnosing and treating an ovarian cyst (a fluid-filled sac on part of the reproductive system) between 2008 and 2013.

Ms C complained of abdominal symptoms in 2008 and various investigations, including an ultrasound scan (a special x-ray using sound waves) were undertaken. In January 2009 she saw a physician at Roodlands Hospital who told her that nothing had been seen on the scan. She continued to experience abdominal symptoms and further investigations took place until 2010. In April 2013 Ms C experienced severe abdominal pain and was referred urgently by her GP to the A&E department of another hospital, where she had emergency surgery to remove the cyst.

We took independent advice from one of our medical advisers who was satisfied that the care and treatment provided to Ms C was reasonable and timely. We found that the cyst had shown up on the scan taken in 2009 but that following consultation with the gynaecology (disorders of the female reproductive system) department it was thought that the cyst was not the cause of Ms C's symptoms. The board acknowledged that this was not discussed with Ms C as further investigation of the cyst had been delegated to her GP. The GP told the physician that they had discussed the matter again with the gynaecologists who advised that no action was required. Our adviser was of the view that it was reasonable to delegate the further investigation to the GP, and also commented that the sudden onset of symptoms from the cyst after a long period of having no direct symptoms was a known and common complication of ovarian cysts.