

SPSO decision report

Case: 201403037, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained to us on behalf of her partner (Mr A), who had a history of gastroenterological problems (problems with the digestive system). Ms C had previously complained to the board about the care and treatment that Mr A was receiving from them. Ms C then made a second complaint which was considered during this investigation. Ms C complained that the board had not provided reasonable care and treatment to Mr A in the period covered by the complaint. Ms C was dissatisfied that they had been unable to reach a diagnosis for Mr A's condition, and was also concerned that her previous complaint had impacted on the subsequent care that Mr A received.

After taking independent advice from one of our medical advisers, who is a gastroenterology consultant, we did not uphold this complaint. The adviser considered that, overall, the care and treatment provided by the board was reasonable. We did find that the doctor/patient relationship with one of the consultants who had been treating Mr A had broken down. Following this, although a letter was sent to Mr A's GP explaining the situation, the consultant did not arrange a referral to another consultant. The adviser said this had no impact on Mr A as the GP made a referral instead, but we have made a recommendation to draw this point to the attention of the relevant consultant. We found no evidence that Ms C's prior complaint had affected the medical treatment provided to Mr A.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- bring the adviser's comments about onward referral when the doctor/patient relationship has broken down to the attention of the relevant consultant.