

SPSO decision report

Case: 201406715, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C said that his GP had referred him to hospital for a rheumatology appointment but that the rheumatology consultant had rejected the referral as he did not think it would have been of benefit to Mr C. Mr C said he had then been told by a pain management consultant that there was nerve root damage. Mr C had complained to the board. The board's response to Mr C's complaint explained that the initial referral was actioned quickly but there was no indication from the referral letter that Mr C's problems were due to inflammation (which would have triggered a referral to rheumatology). The rheumatology consultant had contacted Mr C's GP at the time and the GP had not advised him that Mr C's condition had changed. Mr C complained to us that the board had failed to adequately respond to his formal complaint.

We took independent advice from one of our advisers who told us that the nerve root damage described was not evidence of inflammation and as such the actions of the rheumatology consultant were appropriate. It was also noted that on receipt of the rheumatology consultant's letter, the GP had recorded that he also did not feel that a rheumatology assessment was appropriate. We found that the board's response to the formal complaint was appropriate and so we did not uphold the complaint.