

SPSO decision report

Case: 201407150, Highland NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: communication / staff attitude / dignity / confidentiality
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained to us about how the board had handled his enquiries about NHS continuing health care. His mother had been assessed as needing continuing care, but was in hospital in another health board's area. Mr C had written to the board to ask for further information about this. The board did not respond and he had to contact them again. Despite this, he still did not receive a response and in view of this, we upheld this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

Mr C also complained that the board had failed to handle his complaint about this matter in accordance with their complaints procedure. We found that the board had adequately responded to the points Mr C had raised in his complaint. We also found that it had been reasonable for the board to contact his mother's power of attorney to obtain consent to share the details of the investigation with him. However, we found that there had been a delay in responding to Mr C's complaint and we also upheld this aspect of his complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- issue a written apology to Mr C for the delay in responding to his complaint; and
- make relevant staff aware of our findings on his complaints.