

SPSO decision report

Case: 201503627, Lothian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C's mother (Ms A) had ingrowing toenails. Following a house call from her GP, she was referred to the board's podiatry service for treatment. Mr C said Ms A was in pain and called the podiatry service. He was told the waiting time could be up to 12 weeks. He was not prepared to wait that long so he paid for the treatment to be done privately. When Mr C complained to the board about the length of time Ms A would have had to wait, the board explained that the GP referral had contained no indication that Ms A was in pain. Had it done so, she would have been seen sooner.

We sought independent advice from a hospital adviser. The adviser considered that, in the absence of any indication of urgency in the GP referral, it was reasonable that the podiatry service deemed the referral to be routine rather than urgent. We accepted the adviser's view and did not uphold the complaint.