

SPSO decision report

Case: 201508067, Highland NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C was experiencing pain in his left knee and was referred to Raigmore Hospital by his GP. Mr C was seen by specialists at a number of appointments over the following two years as his symptoms worsened and began to affect other areas including his back. Mr C complained that the staff caring for him at the board had failed to pick up on his spinal problems or investigate appropriately.

After taking independent advice on this case from a consultant orthopaedic surgeon, we did not uphold Mr C's complaint. The advice we received was that Mr C had appropriate treatment for his symptoms and that thorough clinical investigations had been carried out.

However, we found that after one of his appointments, no clinic letter had been issued (a letter that would be sent from a hospital specialist to the patient's GP). The adviser did not consider that this had any impact on the care provided in Mr C's case, but as this could potentially be significant in other cases, we did make a recommendation to the board about this.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- take steps to ensure that clinic letters are appropriately issued following out-patient appointments.