

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201508381, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board

**Sector:** health

**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis

**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained that staff at University Hospital Ayr failed to provide him with appropriate clinical treatment, based on the symptoms he reported.

Mr C experienced pain in his back and dropped foot (a muscular weakness that makes it difficult to lift the front part of the foot and toes). Mr C's GP arranged for him to attend A&E and he was seen by members of the hospital's orthopaedic team. A diagnosis was made of a prolapsed intervertebral disc (ruptured disc in the spine) with associated motor weakness. The decision was made not to treat Mr C surgically at that time. An MRI scan was also considered to be unnecessary. Mr C was referred to his GP to arrange physiotherapy and he saw a physiotherapist some days later. Based on Mr C's symptoms, he was then referred to hospital and received an MRI scan and an emergency operation.

After receiving independent advice from an orthopaedic surgeon, we did not uphold Mr C's complaint. We found that an examination of Mr C at A&E did not reveal red flag features (features which would have required urgent intervention). In this context, we found that the plan of management without surgery adopted at A&E was appropriate. We therefore did not uphold Mr C's complaint.