

SPSO decision report

Case: 201602512, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C, who had a history of osteoporosis, fell whilst in Ninewells Hospital. She complained that despite being in a great deal of pain, her back was not x-rayed.

On her discharge, Mrs C complained to the board but they advised that as she had been checked after her fall by increasingly senior doctors who found no bony tenderness, an x-ray had not been required and she had been discharged with appropriate advice. Mrs C learned from a subsequent x-ray that she had suffered a fracture to her spine.

We took independent advice from a consultant in acute medicine. We found that Mrs C had been appropriately assessed and examined after her fall. She had no bony tenderness which would have indicated that an x-ray was required. We also found that even if Mrs C had been x-rayed at the time and a fracture had been found, she would have been given no additional or different medication and her treatment would have remained the same. This was because she was already taking medication for a previous fracture.

We did not uphold the complaint.