

SPSO decision report

Case: 201602805, Highland NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C was referred to a urologist at Raigmore Hospital to have his history of erectile dysfunction and low testosterone investigated. Mr C raised a complaint nine months later as he had not received an appointment and was distressed by his ongoing symptoms.

The board informed Mr C that there was a long waiting list. Mr C raised further concerns that he had not received an appointment, 13 months after his original referral. It took until 19 months after his referral for Mr C to be seen by a urologist.

We took independent medical advice. We found that Mr C's wait to see a urologist was entirely unreasonable and significantly exceeded the Scottish Government's waiting time of 12 weeks for a new out-patient appointment. We were also concerned that the board had not provided evidence to show whether steps had been taken to reduce the waiting time of the urology clinic.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- apologise to Mr C for the unreasonable delay in his receiving a urology appointment; and
- provide clear evidence showing the steps they are taking to meet the 12-week waiting time target for appointments in the urology department at Raigmore Hospital and what they will do in cases where they are unable to meet the target.