

SPSO decision report

Case: 201603899, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the treatment she received at the Queen Elizabeth University Hospital during labour. Mrs C's concerns included that during the delivery, she sustained a tear which resulted in significant bowel problems. Mrs C also said the board failed to provide her with appropriate follow-up treatment for her bowel problems.

We obtained independent medical advice on the complaint from a consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist. The adviser explained that Mrs C sustained a third degree perineal tear (a tear which involves the muscles around the anus which contract to provide continence of faeces) during labour. They said that third degree perineal tears were a recognised complication of vaginal birth, and that Mrs C's records suggested that she was informed of the risk of this complication before the birth of her baby. We noted that the board apologised for the added pain and discomfort Mrs C experienced as a result of the tear. We considered this to be reasonable and did not uphold this part of Mrs C's complaint.

The adviser confirmed that Mrs C was appropriately seen in a specialist clinic 11 weeks and 25 weeks after the delivery of her baby daughter and that the treatment she received during the appointments was reasonable. However, it appeared that Mrs C did not receive the planned physiotherapy treatment following her first clinic appointment. We were critical of the board in this regard and upheld this part of Mrs C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Provide Mrs C with a written apology.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Staff should arrange follow-up physiotherapy treatment for patients in cases such as this.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.