

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201604009, Grampian NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C, who works for an advocacy and support service, complained on behalf of her client (Ms A). She complained about the care and treatment Ms A received from Aberdeen Maternity Hospital following the birth of her child by caesarean section. Ms A had a protracted and difficult recovery period requiring further surgical intervention which she felt was due to a delay in diagnosing a hole in her bowel. Ms A was also unhappy that she was not given the opportunity to have Ms C present at a meeting which was arranged by the board's consultant obstetrician to discuss matters related to Ms A's obstetric care following the complaint being submitted.

We took independent advice from two advisers, one a consultant obstetrician and the other a consultant colorectal surgeon. We found that the care and treatment provided from the obstetricians and surgeons was of a reasonable and appropriate standard. There was evidence to show that Ms A's symptoms were appropriately monitored, investigated and regularly reviewed following the birth of her child. Given the findings of her assessments, we found that her initial care was reasonable, with no undue delay in surgical treatment going ahead. As such, we did not uphold this part of Ms A's complaint.

Whilst we considered that the board's consultant obstetrician acted appropriately in offering Ms A an appointment to review how she was getting on and to discuss her obstetric care, we considered that they should have informed Ms C of the date. It was clear that Ms A had been significantly affected by the events related to her care and required an advocate. We upheld this part of the complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Provide a written apology for failing to inform Ms A of the date of her appointment to discuss her obstetric care. This apology should comply with SPSO guidelines on making an apology, available at <https://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance>.

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.