

SPSO decision report

Case: 201604427, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C underwent an operation at Ninewells Hospital to remove a skin tag on his penis. He was concerned about the outcome of the operation and the appearance of the resulting scar, and he said that he was left with some disfigurement. Mr C complained that the consultant urological surgeon told him before the operation that the appearance of his penis would improve with surgery and that he was not warned that there was any risk of disfigurement. Mr C also had concerns about the standard of the operation itself, and follow-up care.

We took independent advice from an adviser who specialises in urological surgery. We found failings in the consent process. We found that there was no evidence that Mr C had been warned of the risk of scarring and that the outcome of the surgery may not meet his expectations until the day of the operation. This meant that he had not been given enough time and appropriate information to make an informed decision, particularly in light of his additional needs. We found no evidence to suggest that the standard of the operation was not reasonable and while there were failings in relation to a follow-up appointment, this was addressed by the board.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- apologise to Mr C for the failings identified in this investigation;
- bring the failings identified in this investigation to the attention of relevant staff; and
- review the consent process and related documentation to ensure that clinicians properly obtain, and document, consent for procedures.