

SPSO decision report

Case: 201608569, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that the prison health centre's decision to reduce and remove his prescribed medication was unreasonable and had caused him to be left in pain. The board said that two nurses had witnessed Mr C attempting to withhold his medication and for that reason a decision had been taken by clinical staff to reduce and remove his medication. They said this was in keeping with an agreement Mr C had previously signed which stated that a failure on Mr C's part to take his medication properly may result in it being reduced or stopped.

Our decision, after taking independent advice from a GP adviser, was that the board had acted reasonably and that the alternative medication Mr C had been prescribed was also reasonable.

However, we were critical of the board's handling of Mr C's complaints. They had failed to follow their complaints handling process, and had failed to address all of Mr C's main points of complaint. We made several recommendations to address the failings we identified.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for failing to handle his complaints properly and for failing to reply fully to him.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Staff should recognise when a complaint has been made and should be aware of the correct process for dealing with it. Complaint responses should cover all significant points raised in the complaint.

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.