

SPSO decision report

Case: 201701625, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment she received during out-patient consultations at University Hospital Crosshouse. Mrs C initially attended a consultation in the renal medicine department (department of medicine relating to the kidneys) and it was felt that her test results showed that she had sub-clinical hypothyroidism (a condition where thyroid stimulating hormone level is higher than normal). Mrs C was prescribed a small dose of medication to treat this. Mrs C subsequently attended a consultation in a different department. This department did not agree that Mrs C had sub-clinical hypothyroidism and recommended that the medication should be stopped. A review appointment was arranged for three months' time. Mrs C was unhappy with this decision and undertook to self-source a supply of thyroid medication. She attended a further consultation in the renal medicine department approximately a year later. At this time, Mrs C was advised to discontinue taking her self-sourced thyroid medication as it was considered that it was causing suppression of her thyroid stimulating hormone. Mrs C disagreed with the board's findings and explained that she felt better taking the thyroid medication, which she reported had also improved her kidney function. She complained to us that the board were not providing her with the medication she felt she needed. Mrs C also complained that she was unreasonably advised to stop taking her self-sourced thyroid medication.

We took independent advice from a consultant physician. We found that the test results over a number of years did not show evidence of sub-clinical hypothyroidism. For this reason, we considered it was reasonable for the board to discontinue the medication and to advise Mrs C of the risks of continued use. In relation to Mrs C's consultation in the renal medicine department a year later, we found that it was reasonable for the board to recommend that Mrs C stop taking the medication. We did not uphold Mrs C's complaints.