

SPSO decision report

Case: 201702044, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C underwent nasal surgery at St Johns Hospital and subsequently had ongoing issues with nasal obstruction, facial pain, breathing issues and sinus infections. Mr C complained that he was not warned of the recognised risks associated with the procedure and that the surgery itself was not performed to a reasonable standard. Mr C also complained that the board did not handle his complaint reasonably.

We took independent advice from an ear, nose and throat consultant. We found that appropriate information was provided to Mr C regarding the recognised risks of the surgery. We also considered that the nasal surgery was performed to a reasonable standard. We did not uphold these aspects of Mr C's complaint. However, we noted that there was a delay in removing Mr C's nasal splints (temporary splints which are used to stabilise the nose after surgery) and made a recommendation in light of this.

In relation to complaints handling, we found that there was a delay in issuing a response to Mr C and that there was insufficient detail about the surgery included in the letter. We considered that the board did not handle Mr C's complaint reasonably and upheld this aspect of his complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for the lack of advice about nasal splints following the surgery, and the failings in complaints handling. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at 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.