

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201704007, Fife NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained about psychiatric treatment she received for anxiety. She complained that there were unnecessary delays and a lack of communication regarding her treatment which added to her anxiety. Ms C complained that her psychiatrist did not assess her properly and proceeded with options for therapy without first carrying out an appropriate assessment.

We took independent advice from a consultant psychiatrist. We found that Ms C's assessment had been appropriate and reasonable, and that medical staff tried to work constructively with Ms C and to tailor treatment to her specific needs and wishes for treatment. We considered that the board had taken Ms C's social anxiety into consideration when arranging appointments. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Ms C also complained about the board's complaints handling. We considered that the board could have clarified aspects of the complaint at the outset, with a view to agreeing a reduced number of complaints. This may have provided for a more manageable complaint from the point of view of investigation. We noted there had been significant delay in providing complaint responses, which had added to Ms C's stress. We considered that the delays were unreasonable and we therefore upheld this aspect of the complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Ms C for the delay in providing a response to her complaints. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance](http://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.