

SPSO decision report

Case: 201706980, Highland NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: adult social work services (highland nhs only)
Decision: upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C has power of attorney for her son (Mr A) who has a learning difficulty and lives independently. Mr A was awarded an Individual Service Fund (ISF) under self-directed support by the board to support him to achieve his personal outcomes.

Mrs C complained that the board did not act reasonably in relation to the ISF. She said that the board unreasonably refused certain funding requests, that they failed to follow procedure and to provide clear information about their policies and procedures. The board acknowledged that their communication regarding their processes was poor, however they did not consider the funding requests sustainably supported Mr A to meet his personal outcomes.

We took independent advice from a social worker. We found that it was reasonable for the board to refuse some of the funding requests, but not all. We found the board failed to ensure the ISF agreement was completed and signed and this was not done until more than 12 months after the ISF started. We concluded that the board did not properly follow procedure and that there were failings in their communication with Mrs C. Therefore, we upheld the complaint. We noted the board had made some significant improvements since Mrs C raised her complaint, therefore we did not make any further recommendations. However, we did ask the board to provide us with evidence of these changes.