

SPSO decision report

Case: 201806585, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment they received from the urology (a speciality in medicine that deals with problems of the urinary system and the male reproductive system) service at Wishaw General Hospital. C was referred to the service with penile fracture symptoms. Following the referral, C was reviewed by two consultant urologists and investigations were performed over the following months. These investigations did not identify what the precise cause of C's symptoms were.

We took independent advice from appropriately qualified advisers. We identified a number of delays in the investigation of C's symptoms and concluded that there had been an unreasonable delay in making a diagnosis. We also found that there was an unreasonable delay in the board sending a discharge letter to C's GP after a surgical procedure was performed. Therefore, we upheld C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for unreasonable delays in the investigations of C's symptoms which resulted in an unreasonable delay in diagnosis. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- In line with Scottish Government standards, no patient should wait longer than 12 weeks for a new out-patient appointment at a consultant-led clinic. Delays in arranging subsequent consultations and tests should be minimised to ensure patients do not experience significant delays.
- When an operative procedure is performed a discharge summary or letter outlining the procedure should be sent promptly to a patient's GP in case of any complications.

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.