

SPSO decision report



Case: 201807229, Highland NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C was admitted to A&E following a road traffic accident. He was concerned that inadequate investigations were carried out to determine the extent of his injuries. Following an MRI scan, it was found that Mr C had a neck injury which required surgery. Mr C also felt his complaints of pain were minimised and often ignored by staff.

We took independent advice from an emergency medicine consultant. We found that proper assessments and investigations were carried out in light of the injuries Mr C presented with. We had no concerns about the way staff managed Mr C's reports of pain and that he was given appropriate pain relief. We found that there was no indication that an MRI of Mr C's neck should have been carried out sooner. MRI scans are required to identify injuries to the soft tissues in the neck or the spinal cord and are normally only carried out when patients have symptoms consistent with spinal cord injury or when, in the presence of a normal CT scan, there is a significant suspicion of a ligamentous injury. In Mr C's case, it was noted that when he displayed a foot drop and weakness in his hand, the decision was taken to obtain an MRI scan.

We found that the board provided reasonable care and treatment for Mr C's neck injury and, therefore, we did not uphold the complaint.