

SPSO decision report

Case: 201809026, Fife NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about a failure on the part of the board to discuss their eye conditions and possible treatments before they were referred to another board for an operation.

We found that, whilst the referral to the other board was reasonable, the fact that C was not involved in a discussion, or advised about possible options for treatment prior to the referral, was unreasonable. Therefore, we upheld this aspect of the complaint.

C also complained about a failure on the part of the board to transfer all relevant medical information to the other board prior to the operation.

We found that it was reasonable practice for the board to state that the other board could contact them for relevant information if they considered it necessary to do so, given they had already met with C and had notes about their condition. We did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for (1) failing to explain to them why the doctor considered it necessary to refer them on to the other health board and (2) failing to send them a copy of the letter to their GP stating why the referral was being made. 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:

- To ensure patients receive information about why a referral has been made for them to see another clinician.

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.