

SPSO decision report

Case: 201900490, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C, who had a history of breast cancer, complained that the board failed to provide them with appropriate care and treatment at the Western General Hospital for a lump on their breast. The lump was investigated but found to be of no concern. Two years later, a clinically suspicious lump was identified and investigations showed evidence of an invasive carcinoma (cancer). C raised a number of issues including why a trainee doctor was allowed to perform a biopsy on the first lump identified on their breast and whether the doctor performed the procedure correctly. C also questioned why the lump in their breast was not removed or investigated further.

We took independent advice from a consultant breast surgeon. We found that it was acceptable for the trainee doctor to perform the procedure under the supervision of the consultant surgeon, as was the case here, and that there was no evidence that the procedure was performed incorrectly. We also considered that the decision taken by the board at that time not to remove the lump or carry out further investigation was reasonable. C's case went through the correct process and we determined that C's treatment was reasonable. We did not uphold this part of the complaint.

C also complained that the board failed to provide them with a reasonable response to their complaint. C raised a number of issues, including that the board's response did not address their specific concerns. We considered that the board's response generally addressed the questions raised by C and we did not uphold this part of the complaint.