

SPSO decision report



Case: 201904096, A Medical Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about the care and treatment provided by the practice in respect of his ongoing knee pain. He attended two consultations with knee pain and had requested to be referred to the orthopaedic (conditions involving the musculoskeletal system) clinic and for a multi-resonance imaging scan (MRI) to be carried out. However, at the first consultation, the practice prescribed anti-inflammatory medication and provided advice regarding exercise and knee care. At the second consultation, the practice arranged for x-rays to be carried out and advised Mr C to make a self-referral to physiotherapy.

Based on Mr C's presentation, the practice concluded that the source of the pain was likely to be osteoarthritis (the most common form of arthritis, usually occurring in older people, with chronic breakdown of cartilage in the joints leading to pain, stiffness, and swelling or the most common form of arthritis that affects the joints). The x-ray results confirmed this but the results were not relayed to Mr C. Years later, Mr C attended a further consultation and the practice made a referral to the orthopaedic clinic. At the time of making his complaint to the SPSO, Mr C was still on the waiting list to be seen at the orthopaedic clinic. This was partly due to the fact that the practice did not consider it appropriate to make an urgent referral. In Mr C's view, the practice unreasonably delayed in referring him to the orthopaedic clinic and for an MRI scan.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that Mr C received appropriate care and treatment for his knee pain. This care and treatment was in line with the Scottish National Knee Pain and Management Pathway, produced by the Scottish Government. We recognised that Mr C was concerned that the practice did not contact him following his x-ray or physiotherapy appointment. However, we did not consider this to be unreasonable or out of line with the procedures of other practices. We did not uphold Mr C's complaint.