

## SPSO decision report



**Case:** 202107141, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division  
**Sector:** Health  
**Subject:** Clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

C complained about their care and treatment following a hysterectomy (a surgical procedure to remove all or a part of the uterus). C complained that they were not provided with adequate pain relief following the surgery, and that they were not fitted with an abdominal drain (a thin plastic tube which is inserted into an abnormal collection of fluid to help remove it from the body). C was discharged a few days later but disputes whether they were fit to be discharged home at this point. C was later readmitted suffering from a blood clot and an infection. C was discharged with oral antibiotics and again disputes whether they were fit to be discharged at this point.

A few days later, C began to bleed heavily. An ambulance was called but the wait was likely to be significant and C was taken to hospital by their partner. C was triaged but asked to sit on a chair in a corridor, despite suffering from obvious heavy vaginal bleeding. C was reviewed by a consultant and sent up to the gynaecology ward where they were then taken for emergency surgery.

We took independent advice from a consultant obstetrician (specialists in pregnancy and childbirth) and a consultant in emergency medicine. We found that C received a reasonable standard of care following their surgery and was appropriately discharged on both occasions. Therefore, we did not uphold these parts of C's complaint.

In relation to C's attendance at A&E, we found that they were not triaged sufficiently quickly and the way C was asked to wait was not appropriate given their condition. C was medically assessed within an appropriate timescale within A&E and appropriately transferred. The board had accepted there were failings in C's care, but they had not set out clearly how they planned to address these issues. Therefore, we upheld this part of C's complaint.

C also complained that the board failed to handle their complaint reasonably. We found that the board handled C's complaint appropriately and did not uphold this part of their complaint.

### Recommendations

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

- Complete an assessment of the delay in triaging C.
- The board should consider what it can do to improve the experience of patients who require privacy when awaiting medical assessment.

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.