

SPSO decision report

Case: 201103843, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained about treatment received after she fractured her wrist. She said that nurses within the hospital's plaster room had incorrectly applied a cast on two dates in January 2011.

She complained in particular that on one visit, the treatment was inappropriate and resulted in permanent damage to her hand and wrist. However, we found no evidence that the treatment was unreasonable – reviews of the positioning of the casts during the board's investigation had established they had been positioned appropriately, and after taking advice from our medical adviser, we accepted this. There was also no evidence Ms C had sustained permanent damage because of the positioning or fitting of the casts. We did not uphold any of her complaints.

Ms C also complained that following her review appointment she had received inappropriate advice from a registrar that she had suffered permanent damage to her wrist, had lost the use of three fingers, and would require obtaining the services of a carer. We found no evidence that this advice had been given, and the written records reflected that she had been given different information.

We also found that the board's investigation into Ms C's complaints was thorough and reasonable, with all issues raised addressed. We noted Ms C had been in frequent communication with the board via letter, email and telephone, and the board had acknowledged all correspondence. We found that the board had generally addressed follow-up queries well, although Ms C had frequently requested two particular members of staff be removed from the investigation, and the board had not addressed this concern. Although we found it was reasonable for the board to maintain those staff members' involvement in the investigation, we found the board could have clearly told Ms C about this decision, and drew this to their attention.