

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201301440, Lothian NHS Board - Acute Division  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C has complex health and mobility issues and has seen a number of hospital consultants over several years. After she saw a consultant orthopaedic surgeon she said she was not given enough information about her diagnosis, and the consultation was rushed. The surgeon arranged a scan, but Mrs C was unable to go through with it and a different scan was carried out instead. Mrs C said that when she raised concerns about the proposed treatment the surgeon did not then discuss alternatives, and she was unhappy with the way the surgeon described events on the day of the scan when writing to her GP about it. Mrs C then attended another consultant's clinic, but he was not there to see her. Mrs C complained to the board about both consultants. The board responded in writing and met with her, but she came to us as she was not happy with the way they handled her complaints. She said that she did not receive an amended agreed copy of the minutes of the meeting, although she provided detailed comments and followed this up with several phone calls and emails. She was also unhappy about the board's response to her complaint about the surgeon, and said that they had not explained how the missed appointment with the second consultant had come about.

We found that the board did not tell Mrs C what had happened about the updated minutes of the meeting, and that, while they responded to her complaint about the surgeon's communication and attitude during consultations, they had not properly addressed the issue of the use of inappropriate language when writing to her GP. We were satisfied that they provided a reasonable explanation and response about the missed appointment with the second consultant.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- clarify in writing to Mrs C the status of the amendments in relation to the meeting note;
- bring the failures in their complaints handling identified in our investigation to the attention of relevant staff; and
- apologise to Mrs C for the failures our investigation identified.