

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201303811, Forth Valley NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Outcome:** some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about the treatment he received in Forth Valley Royal Hospital, Stirling Community Hospital and Falkirk Community Hospital. He said that the board had inappropriately continued with phototherapy (ultraviolet light treatment) he was receiving for a skin condition after he experienced an adverse reaction. He did not think that he should have had this treatment in the first place because of his skin type and believed that this led to him getting skin cancer. After taking independent advice from one of our medical advisers, we found that the board had assessed Mr C's skin type before starting the treatment, and because of it had selected a very gentle regime. Our adviser said that it was appropriate to undertake phototherapy as long as the protocol was followed and caution taken. We found that the protocol had been followed, and the medical adviser did not consider that the phototherapy had caused Mr C's skin cancer. We did not uphold this part of Mr C's complaint.

Mr C also complained that when he was referred for treatment of his skin cancer, the surgeon initially forgot to remove a skin lesion (an area of abnormal tissue) on his neck. We found that the surgeon had been concerned that a lesion on Mr C's scalp was the primary source of the cancer and had prioritised removing this. Our adviser pointed out that if there are time constraints on an operating list, it is reasonable to prioritise clinical treatments. Mr C also said that there was a delay in administering antibiotics for the skin graft applied during the operation. However, we found that antibiotics are not prescribed routinely when skin grafts are applied and we did not uphold this part of the complaint.

Mr C then complained about the ophthalmology (the branch of medicine that deals with the anatomy, physiology and diseases of the eye) treatment he had received. We found that the treatment was appropriate and timely and resolved Mr C's problems, so we did not uphold this complaint. However, we upheld his complaint about delay in arranging for his hearing to be assessed. We did not make any recommendations in relation to this, as the board had already apologised to him for the delay and had outlined the steps they were taking to try to reduce waiting times.