

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201403666, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division

**Sector:** health

**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis

**Outcome:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Ms C complained that, although she had multiple fractures in her foot, she was not treated appropriately and that this led to her condition deteriorating. She said that there were delays in tests on her symptoms and in telling her of the results, and that she should have had a bone scan earlier. Ms C believed that as a result, she had constant pain with reducing mobility.

Ms C complained to the board, who said that they had done their best to deal with her problems and associated pain, but that stress fractures in feet and heels could be difficult to determine and often no specific intervention was required.

We took independent advice from a consultant in rheumatology and osteoporosis (a condition that affects the bones, causing them to become fragile and more likely to break), after which we upheld MS C's complaints about delay. We found that while the investigations into Ms C's foot problems were reasonable, there were delays in completing these and in providing Ms C with the outcome of x-rays and scans. This was unreasonable, given that there was a suspicion of a fracture. The delays also led to a delay in making a diagnosis, although the treatment then provided was all reasonable. Ms C also complained about the way her complaint was dealt with, but the evidence showed that the board had followed their usual processes and replied within their timescales.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- formally apologise;
- review their procedures (including in radiology) to ensure that a similar situation would not occur. They should confirm to us that they have done so; and
- apologise for the delay in providing a diagnosis.