

SPSO decision report

Case: 201702200, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained about a consultation he had at the fracture clinic at Perth Royal Infirmary and the following care and treatment he received. Mr C was referred to the clinic after he fell and injured his hip. Prior to attending the consultation, an x-ray of Mr C's hip had been arranged by his GP, whilst an MRI scan had been carried out privately. Mr C brought the written MRI report to the consultation, but did not bring the imaging CD. After examination, the surgeon decided that conservative treatment (medical treatment avoiding radical therapy or an operation) was appropriate and they arranged to review Mr C in three months' time. Mr C obtained a different opinion on the treatment of his injury from a surgeon at a different NHS board. Mr C then agreed to have surgery on his hip at this same NHS board and said that this improved his condition.

Mr C raised concern that the surgeon at Perth Royal Infirmary failed to carry out an appropriate assessment of his condition. Mr C felt that the surgeon should have reviewed the MRI images and spoken to the radiologist who carried out the MRI privately. We received independent advice from a consultant orthopaedic surgeon. They said that Mr C was responsible for providing the MRI images, if he wished for them to be considered. The adviser considered that the assessment carried out was reasonable, and we did not uphold the complaint.

Mr C also complained that the board had failed to provide him with the same care that he subsequently received from another health board. In response to our enquiries, the board said that, based on the information available to them, they could see no reason for surgery and were satisfied that conservative treatment was appropriate. The adviser was satisfied that the surgeon's diagnosis was reasonable and consistent with Mr C's symptoms and the radiological findings. The adviser said that it was appropriate for the surgeon to arrange to review Mr C again, but suggested that an earlier review might have been more reassuring for Mr C. The adviser did not consider the different treatment by another NHS board to reflect failure in care on the part of the board, and they were satisfied that the care and treatment provided by them was reasonable. We did not uphold this complaint.

Finally, Mr C raised concern about the quality of the board's complaint investigation. We found that the board's complaint response did provide an explanation about the surgeon's findings and a reason for the treatment they suggested. We noted that an independent clinician had reviewed the surgeon's findings and the medical records, which informed the board's response to the complaint. We were satisfied that the approach taken to investigating the complaint was reasonable, and we did not uphold this complaint.