

SPSO decision report



Case: 201903691, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) care and treatment provided to their child (A). A had an assessment with CAMHS, and following this, the board felt that further CAMHS input was not necessary as they considered the information suggested attachment related difficulties as opposed to a neuro-developmental disorder. C complained that the board had not carried out an in-depth assessment or obtained relevant information from A's school.

We took independent advice from a CAMHS mental health nurse. We found that the assessment of A carried out by CAMHS was reasonable and gathered the appropriate information in order to make a decision that no further input or support from CAMHS was required. We did not uphold this aspect of C's complaint.

C also complained that following A's appointment, the board's communication was unreasonable as they were not told of follow-up appointments in a timely manner and had not fully discussed A's case with C. We found that in all but one case, appointment letters were sent to C in a timely manner. However, we found that the board had failed to explain to C that the school assessments were no longer required and the reasons for this. On this basis, we upheld this aspect of C's complaint.

We also identified that the board had failed to follow up on an action agreed in their complaint response and made a recommendation in relation to this.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for failing to explain that school assessments were no longer required and the reasons for this; and for failing to follow up the referral. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets
- The board should consider whether it would still be appropriate to follow up the referral to the area inclusion team at this point. They may wish to contact C to discuss whether this is something A would still benefit from.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- If decisions are made not to proceed with assessments, this should be explained to the patient/their family.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Actions agreed in complaint responses should be followed up and there should be evidence of the actions being taken.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.