

SPSO decision report

Case: 201911174, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided to their child (A) by the dermatology service at University Hospital Hairmyres regarding skin lesions. In particular, C was concerned about the length of time taken to refer their child to paediatric dermatology at a children's hospital, that this referral was not marked as urgent and antibiotics or a steroid cream were not prescribed earlier. We took independent advice from a consultant dermatologist. We found that the length of time taken to refer A to paediatric dermatology was not unreasonable in the circumstances. It was reasonable that the referral to paediatric dermatology was routine rather than urgent given A's clinical presentation, that antibiotics were not prescribed earlier as there was no indication of increased swelling, pain and increasing size or progression of the lesions, and that topical steroids were not prescribed in the absence of a definite clinical diagnosis. We did not uphold C's complaint about the care and treatment provided to A.

C also complained about the way the board handled their complaint. We found that one of the board's complaint responses did not address all the points raised by C. We upheld C's complaint in this regard.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for failing to address all the points they raised in the complaint response. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

In relation to complaints handling, we recommended:

- Complaint responses should address all the points raised.

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.