

SPSO decision report



Case: 202303373, Highland NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained that the board failed to provide them with reasonable care and treatment in relation to their breast cancer care. C raised concerns that the board failed to carry out necessary scans and failed to offer neoadjuvant chemotherapy (treatment given before the primary course of treatment to reduce the size of the tumour). C also complained about the waiting times in relation to surgeries and the mastectomy report; and that the board failed to adhere to the relevant local and national guidelines.

We took independent advice from a consultant breast surgeon. We found that the care and treatment provided to C was reasonable. In particular, we found that C did not meet the requirements to receive neoadjuvant chemotherapy prior to surgery and, accordingly, it was not unreasonable that the board did not perform further scans. We found that the waiting times were reasonable. We also found that the board's medical team had followed relevant local and national guidelines and C had been provided with reasonable care and treatment based on the information available to the clinicians at the time. Therefore, we did not uphold C's complaint.

In relation to complaint handling, we found that C was provided with updates on the progress of their investigation and the reason for the delay. However, C was not given a revised timescale for completion so we provided feedback to the board on this point.