

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201302998, Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board

**Sector:** health

**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis

**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Miss C complained to us on behalf of her son (Mr A). She said that the board had failed to provide reasonable care and treatment to him after he injured his nose. Mr A had several appointments in the board's ear, nose and throat (ENT) and maxillofacial (the specialty concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the mouth, jaws, face and neck) departments after he sustained the injury.

We took independent advice on the complaint from one of our medical advisers, who is an experienced ENT surgeon. We found that the board had initially taken reasonable action to investigate Mr A's problems. However, we found that staff in the ENT department had failed to identify that an x-ray that had been carried out suggested a disease in one of his sinuses. They had then not taken action to investigate this further, and in view of this, we upheld this aspect of Miss C's complaint.

Miss C also complained about the way in which the board handled a complaint from Mr A's representative about the matter. We found that they had delayed in issuing a response, and had failed to keep Mr A's representative updated when the response was delayed.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- apologise to Mr A for the failure to adequately investigate the condition affecting his sinus;
- take steps to arrange an urgent ENT appointment for Mr A in order that the matter can be investigated;
- review the reporting of images in the ENT department to ensure these are appropriately reported;
- make the staff involved in Mr A's care in the ENT department aware of our finding on this matter;
- remind the staff involved in handling the complaint that they should keep complainants updated when there is a delay in a response being issued; and
- apologise to Mr A for the complaints handling failures.