

SPSO decision report

Case: 201407199, Forth Valley NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C's GP had referred him to the board in November 2014 as he required the removal of his gallbladder. Although Mr C was not a resident in the board area he had received previous treatment there and his daughter lived nearby. The plan was that Mr C would stay with his daughter on his discharge following the surgery and the board had indicated that they were willing to accept him for surgery on this basis. Mr C emailed the board three times in January 2015 as he had heard nothing more. He was then advised that the board could not accommodate the GP's referral, and that the board had referred him to the health board where Mr C was resident. Mr C complained about the delay by the board in responding to his GP referral.

The board apologised for the delay in responding to Mr C's emails and explained that the reason they could not carry out the surgery was due to pressure on their services and that to accept a referral from another health board would put added pressure on an already pressured system. We upheld the complaint and found that between November 2014 and January 2015 there was no action taken regarding the GP referral as two staff members thought the other was dealing with the matter.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- ensure that the staff members who considered whether to action the GP referral reflect on their actions and discuss the complaint at their next appraisal.