

SPSO decision report

Case: 201500935, Forth Valley NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that a prison health centre failed to refer him to a plastic surgery clinic for scar revision. This was in relation to scars on his abdomen which were causing him pain and discomfort. We took independent advice on the complaint from a GP. We were informed that the prison health centre had sent a referral to the plastic surgery clinic but it was subsequently decided that revision surgery was not appropriate, as Mr C was continuing to self-harm at the time. We were advised that the decision not to progress the referral in such circumstances was reasonable and in line with relevant guidelines. We accepted this advice and did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Mr C also complained about the way his complaints were handled by both the prison health centre and the board. He noted that he had asked specific questions in his complaints and that these had not been answered. We agreed that the prison health centre had only formally addressed one of the two points raised with them and the board's formal response omitted a reply to one of the four points raised with them. We, therefore, upheld this part of the complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- issue a written apology to Mr C for failing to fully respond to his feedback and complaint forms; and
- make the relevant complaints handling staff aware of our findings.