

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201605507, Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board - Acute Services Division  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained that there was an unreasonable delay in the board providing him with treatment on his right eye. Mr C is diabetic and was referred to Gartnavel General Eye Hospital when he began having problems with the vision in his right eye. Mr C was seen by the vitreo-retinal (relating to the back of the eye) unit at the hospital eight weeks after the initial referral was made, and it was determined that he needed surgery on the eye. Surgery was carried out around three weeks later, and afterwards Mr C was told that he would not regain sight in the eye. Mr C complained that in the time he had to wait for an appointment at the hospital he went from being able to see to losing sight in his right eye.

In response to our enquiries, the board explained that when Mr C's referral to the hospital was made, it was not logged in the normal way on the electronic system and therefore was not given a clinical priority. The board apologised for this and said that they had taken measures to prevent the likelihood of this recurring in the future.

During our investigation, we took independent advice from a medical professional who is an ophthalmologist. We found that, given the symptoms that were recorded in the referral, Mr C should have been given clinical priority and an urgent appointment. We found that the delay between Mr C being referred to the vitreo-retinal unit and being seen by them was unreasonable. We also found that had surgery been carried out at an earlier point, Mr C would have had more of a chance of maintaining a better level of vision. Therefore, we upheld his complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mr C for the delay in providing treatment for his right eye.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Consultants should be aware that one of the biggest determinants of visual outcome following retinal surgery is the visual acuity when surgery is carried out.
- Referrals to the vitreo-retinal service should be appropriately logged.

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.