

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201708511, Fife NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** some upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about the care and treatment he received from the board's mental health services. In particular, he raised concerns about the board only offering appointments outwith his home when he had difficulty leaving his home and that they did not discuss his care plan with him. Mr C also complained about the board's handling of his complaint.

We took independent advice from a mental health nurse. We found that there was evidence that a thorough assessment had been carried out in which Mr C was meaningfully involved. We acknowledged that it was clear that leaving the house was anxiety-provoking for Mr C. However, it appeared that Mr C was resorting to managing his anxiety by displaying avoidant behaviour which generally serves to increase anxiety in the long term. We considered that the types of support offered to Mr C, including group and one-to-one sessions aimed at confidence building, were reasonable under the circumstances. We also found evidence that confirmed Mr C's participation in discussions about his care plan. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

In relation to complaints handling, the board accepted that there had been unacceptable delays caused by confusion around who was investigating the complaint. We found that the board had unreasonably classified Mr C's original complaint as a 'concern', when it should have been treated as a complaint. Even after it was classified correctly, the board took almost three months to respond to the complaint. We were also critical of the board's failure to send Mr C an application to access his medical records, despite him twice providing the information they had requested. Therefore, we upheld this aspect of Mr C's complaint.

### Recommendations