

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201801806, Golden Jubilee National Hospital  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** communication / staff attitude / dignity / confidentiality  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained about a number of concerns about the service and treatment he received while in the Golden Jubilee National Hospital. He was admitted to hospital in preparation for receiving a heart transplant.

Firstly, Mr C complained about the behaviour and attitude of hospital staff towards him during a grand ward round. He stated that they spoke to him in an aggressive and threatening manner. Although there was no evidence of what members of staff the board spoke to as part of their complaint investigation, we noted that Mr C's medical records contained an entry written by a member of staff not named in the complaint. This case note provided a different account from the one Mr C provided. We did not take a view on which account was the definitive one but concluded that there was not sufficient evidence to confirm Mr C's account. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Mr C's second complaint was about the fact that all his teeth were removed in preparation for the transplant surgery. We took independent advice from a consultant cardiologist (a doctor who specialises in the heart and blood vessels). We found that, based on the medical records, it was appropriate for Mr C's teeth to be removed. This was because Mr C's records showed he had significant dental and gum disease. Following transplant, Mr C would have to take long-term immunosuppressant medication. As a result, such dental issues would present an on-going risk of potentially life-threatening infection. Therefore, the hospital's actions were appropriate, and we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Mr C's third complaint was that the board did not investigate and respond to his complaint appropriately or reasonably. We found that there were some areas where the board's investigation and response to Mr C's complaint could have been improved. In particular, we highlighted a lack of records of who was spoken with as part of the complaint investigation. However, we did not consider there to be significant failings that would lead us to conclude that the board did not investigate Mr C's complaint reasonably or appropriately. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.

Mr C's final complaint related to the board's decision to discontinue his treatment and to refer him elsewhere. This was done as the clinical team concluded that they could no longer provide safe and effective treatment to Mr C. We considered that the clinical team and the board acted appropriately and in line with relevant guidance. We also found that the clinical team's decision had been appropriately documented and justified. We recognised that this caused great upset and difficulty for Mr C. However, we did not consider their actions to be unreasonable. Therefore, we did not uphold this aspect of the complaint.