

SPSO decision report

Case: 201905731, Borders NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about their urology care (the branch of medicine and physiology concerned with the function and disorders of the urinary system) and treatment at Borders General Hospital. C has a complex past urological and surgical history including a total cystectomy (bladder removal), and was referred to urology with ongoing pain and discomfort around their stoma region (an opening in the abdomen formed during a colostomy procedure). C complained that the urologist did not see them and that they were instead seen by a general surgical registrar who failed to identify symptoms of a kidney stone. C subsequently became very unwell and was admitted to hospital with an obstructed infected kidney.

In their response to C's complaint, the board confirmed that the urologist felt it best for C to be seen by the consultant general surgeon who had carried out their most recent hernia (a weakness in the abdominal wall beside a stoma which allows the bowel to protrude outwards) repair surgery. They noted that, when C was then assessed by the surgical registrar, they did not have any specific symptoms which would have indicated the presence of a kidney stone.

We took independent medical advice from a consultant urological surgeon. We found that it was reasonable for C's clinical assessment to have taken place with either the surgical or urological consultant team. We, therefore, did not uphold C's complaint about a lack of urological review. We considered that C was appropriately assessed by the surgical registrar, and there was no clinical evidence at that time to indicate the presence of a kidney stone. We did not uphold C's complaint about a failure to diagnose their kidney stone. We noted, however, that C should have been seen by the consultant general surgeon, rather than a surgical trainee, in light of their complex history. We fed this back to the board.