

SPSO decision report

Case: 202206401, A Medical Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

C complained about the care and treatment provided by the practice. C was diagnosed with polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS, a condition that affects the function of the ovaries) a number of years ago and had previously had an ovarian cyst removed. Over the following years, C experienced a number of symptoms, including abdominal pain which the practice attributed to irritable bowel syndrome (IBS, a common condition that affects the digestive system). C complained that the practice did not explore a potential link to their PCOS. C attended A&E with severe pain. It was identified that C had a large ovarian cyst which required surgery. C complained that the practice's failure to diagnose the cyst exacerbated their symptoms and led to prolonged pain and discomfort. C also complained about poor postoperative care by the practice.

The practice confirmed they were satisfied that their treatment of C's symptoms was appropriate in the circumstances and explained that the NHS does not offer routine surveillance scans for patients with PCOS or to patients who have a history of cysts.

We took independent advice from a GP. We found that prior to C's attendance at A&E, there was no significant evidence of a cyst and in the absence of any other clinical indication it was reasonable to attribute C's symptoms to IBS. With regard to C's concern about the postoperative care provided, we noted that the practice diagnosed an incisional hernia and referred C to the Surgical Admissions Unit where an ultrasound was carried out but failed to show anything. A subsequent CT scan identified three hernias. We concluded that the GP's presumed diagnosis of a hernia was reasonable and therefore C was appropriately referred to the Surgical Admissions Unit. Overall, we were satisfied that the care and treatment provided to C was reasonable and we did not uphold C's complaints.