

SPSO decision report

Case: 201305797, A Dental Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: patient lists
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained that her dental practice had decided to remove her from their patient list without providing her with treatment for a three month period in accordance with national guidance. She also told us that she made a complaint to the practice in 2012 and that she had not been told the outcome.

We found that, although the practice had the right to give notice of removal from the list, they also had a statutory duty to provide dental treatment for a three month period after their decision. Their final letter to Miss C did not mention this, and so gave the impression that termination would take effect immediately. We also found that the practice did not deal with the previous complaint appropriately and should have told Miss C of the outcome of their investigation into that complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- remind staff of their obligation to provide dental treatment for a period of three months after their intention to withdraw from a continuing care arrangement and to communicate this to the patient;
- apologise to Miss C for the failure to explain that dental treatment would continue for a period of three months or until she registered at another dental practice;
- remind staff of their obligations under the NHS complaints procedure; and
- apologise to Miss C for the failure to respond to her complaint in an appropriate manner.