

SPSO decision report

Case: 201403023, A Dentist in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C was a new patient at a dental practice where she presented with a chipped tooth. She saw a dentist who examined her mouth and did an x-ray which revealed some decay. She attended the dentist six times within two months and during this time, root canal treatment was commenced, she had one extraction and four fillings.

Ms C complained about the care and treatment she received. She said that it had been unnecessary and left her with damaged teeth and in pain. However, the dentist said that she had presented with extensively damaged teeth which required attention and that although Ms C had had a difficult time, this was as a consequence of extensive decay. Despite her best efforts, the dentist said that she had been unable to save one of Ms C's teeth.

We took independent dental advice, and found that Ms C's notes were poorly recorded and that while decay was present in some of Ms C's teeth for which treatment was necessary, it appeared that one of Ms C's teeth had been treated in error while a damaged tooth received no treatment. We also found that some of the decay was minimal, not requiring the extensive drilling that was undertaken. While the dentist recorded that she had had to give Ms C extensive treatment, the condition of Ms C's mouth as recorded in her notes suggested that she only required oral hygiene advice. We upheld Ms C's complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the dentist:

- make a full apology; and
- undergo additional training in record-keeping and address the concerns raised by the adviser as part of her continuing professional development. She should confirm to us that she has done so.