

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201403381, 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, and had seen a dentist there who started her treatment. However, Ms C complained that when she attended another dentist (the dentist) in the practice as an emergency, she was not cared for or treated properly. She said that the dentist was reluctant to treat her and that when she did, she gave Ms C an injection that caused bruising and facial swelling. Ms C also said that the dentist drilled her tooth too deeply and then left her without finishing the treatment, saying that she did not have the necessary equipment. Ms C believed that her treatment was not carried out properly, and said that it caused her extreme pain and discomfort.

We took independent dental advice and found that after examining Ms C's mouth, the dentist gave Ms C appropriate advice and treatment, but did not take an x-ray to review the existing fillings to ensure that she was fully informed. We found that the dentist should also have continued Ms C's treatment, as it was possible to do so without the equipment to which she referred. Alternatively, if she felt she was unable to do this, she should have referred Ms C to a more experienced practitioner. Because of these failings, on balance we upheld the complaint. Our adviser noted, however, that although Ms C suffered discomfort and bruising because of an injection, this was a well-recognised complication and not a reflection on the ability of the dentist.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the dentist:

- apologise to Ms C; and
- reflect on what happened 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.