

SPSO decision report

Case: 201404089, Forth Valley NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained to us that the board had unreasonably refused to give him braces when he entered prison. The prison dentist originally told Mr C that he could not have braces because his oral hygiene was poor. He gave Mr C advice about improving this. When Mr C's oral hygiene had sufficiently improved, the dentist took impressions of Mr C's teeth for study models in order that the models could be scored for the Index of Orthodontic Treatment Need (IOTN). However, both the dentist and an orthodontist considered that Mr C did not achieve the minimum score for orthodontic treatment on the IOTN and that he did not meet the criteria for NHS orthodontic treatment.

We took independent advice on the complaint from a dental adviser with experience in orthodontics. We found that if Mr C's oral hygiene had remained poor during orthodontic treatment, there would have been a risk of the development of decay and further damage to his teeth around the brace. Mr C was also given reasonable advice and the opportunity to improve his oral hygiene. Mr C's oral hygiene had subsequently improved, however, the impressions that were taken showed that he did not meet the criteria for NHS orthodontic treatment, as he did not achieve the minimum score for orthodontic treatment on the IOTN. Consequently, we found that it had been reasonable for the board not to give Mr C braces and we did not uphold his complaint.