

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201601748, A Dentist in the Highland NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** communication / staff attitude / dignity / confidentiality  
**Decision:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained that, at an emergency dental appointment, the dentist did not communicate adequately with her. Mrs C said that the dentist told her that previous treatment carried out had not been done correctly and that corrective work would be required. Mrs C said that no explanation was given to her of the work required or costs.

We took independent dental advice. The adviser said that the dental records showed that the dentist was unhappy with the previous work carried out on Mrs C's teeth, but that it was not clear whether these concerns were communicated to Mrs C. We found that the records showed that the dentist communicated to Mrs C that the appointment in question was only to deal with the pain she was suffering from at that point and not to decide on future treatment. Whilst we considered the dental records could have been clearer in showing what was communicated to Mrs C, we were satisfied that the dentist adequately explained that the emergency appointment was only to treat the tooth that was causing pain, and not to create a treatment plan for the future. We did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.