

Case: 201104543, A Dentist in the Grampian NHS Board Area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C went to her dental practice to have a tooth removed and a neighbouring tooth filled. She returned to the practice several weeks later complaining of toothache and saw another dentist. Mrs C decided to have the problematic tooth extracted. Mrs C said that before the extraction she clearly told the dentist that her toothache was originating from the tooth that had recently been filled. Shortly after the extraction, she returned to the dentist complaining that he had removed the wrong tooth. The dentist said he had tapped on both neighbouring teeth several times to find out which tooth was causing Mrs C pain, and that she several times identified the one he extracted as the problematic tooth. Mrs C did not recall the dentist tapping her teeth but even if he did, she said that she did not know if she could have said which tooth was causing pain when tapped, given the recent extraction and that she had painful toothache in the same area. Mrs C later had the problematic tooth extracted and remains very distressed at the effect of the three adjacent missing teeth.

We did not uphold the complaint. We found that the dentist carried out an appropriate examination, which led him to a reasonable diagnosis, and that the extraction of the tooth was reasonable. We also found it reasonable that the dentist failed to apologise for the extraction.

When this report was first published on 24 October 2012, it was incorrectly categorised as being about Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board. This was due to an administrative error which we discovered on 31 October 2012, and for which we apologise.