

Case: 201100882, A Dental Practice in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about treatment she received from a dental practice. She had had a replacement bridge fitted which caused her difficulties. The practice and Mrs C had different views about what had happened. Mrs C said her dentist had advised her to have the bridge replaced, but the practice said that Mrs C had expressed dissatisfaction with her original bridge and had made several requests for it to be replaced. When we looked at the written records, these did not show that Mrs C had been fully informed of the risks of having her bridgework replaced. On this basis we upheld the complaint as we found that Mrs C had not been able to give fully informed consent to the procedure.

Mrs C also complained that the bridge was inadequate. It fractured, fell out on several occasions and Mrs C developed abscesses. We found that the practice had replaced the old single-unit bridge with a bridge in two parts, which was not in the original approved treatment plan. After taking advice from our dental adviser, we found some aspects of the work unsatisfactory, in particular that Mrs C's bite was not properly assessed at the fitting stage, the bridge had to be re-fixed a number of times and the porcelain had fractured. We also upheld this complaint.

Finally, although we recognised that the practice had refunded Mrs C the cost of the bridge and referred her for specialist treatment, we found that they had failed to correct the work, as Mrs C has continued to experience numerous difficulties.

Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- provide evidence to the Ombudsman that they take steps to ensure patients give fully informed consent by advising them of potential risks with

proposed dental work, and keep adequate records of such discussions;
and discuss options for further treatment with Mrs C, and

- undertake and meet the cost of any further treatment as laid out within the suggested treatment plan in the specialist's letter.