

SPSO decision report

Case: 201202069, A Dentist in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment; diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that he was unreasonably charged for a temporary lower denture that he was unable to wear because it did not fit. He was unhappy about the appearance of his new upper denture and that his dentist refused to make a new denture without charge. Mr C said that he had told his dentist that he liked the appearance of his old denture, and wanted his new upper denture to look the same.

The dental clinic told us that Mr C needed to have five teeth extracted, and they had advised him that his best clinical option was to have new temporary dentures made. Mr C instead opted to have his existing dentures adapted. We found that, as the dentist had warned that this could result in the denture being a poor fit, Mr C had not been charged unreasonably.

In relation to the appearance of Mr C's new denture we found that dentures are provided by the NHS on the basis of clinical rather than cosmetic need. Mr C told us that he had not taken his glasses to these appointments and had simply assumed that the denture would be similar in appearance to his old one. There was no evidence that Mr C had told his dentist clearly at the relevant appointments that he was totally dissatisfied with the appearance or shape of the upper denture. As there was also no evidence that he had clearly told his dentist that he wanted his new denture to look the same as the old one, we did not uphold this complaint. Nor did we find it unreasonable that Mr C's dentist refused to make a new upper denture without charge. We noted that Mr C has the option of seeing a new dentist for a second opinion.