

SPSO decision report

Case: 201301837, A Dentist in the Fife NHS Board area

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mr C complained that he had been inappropriately treated by his dentist. He was unhappy with the insertion of two crowns on teeth in his upper jaw and the removal of a crown from a tooth from his lower jaw. Mr C said that the upper crowns had not been fitted properly, and had left unsightly gaps between his teeth, which had never been there before. Mr C said that the dentist had then referred him to a dental hospital, because the dentist found him too difficult to deal with. Mr C also complained that when attempting to remove the crown from his lower jaw, the dentist had removed almost the entire tooth. He said he had not been warned that this was a possibility and, had he known this, he would not have agreed to the removal of the crown.

We took independent advice on Mr C's complaint from our dental adviser. He said the decision to replace the two upper crowns was appropriate, and was supported by the x-rays of the teeth, and that the same applied to the removal of the crown from the lower tooth. He said that gaps between the teeth would have appeared as inflammation of the gums (caused by previous poorly fitting crowns) receded. It was appropriate for the dentist to have referred Mr C to the dental hospital, in line with General Dental Council guidelines, once it became clear he was still unhappy with the treatment he had received. The adviser said that the dental records for the removal of the crown from the lower tooth showed that the treatment options were explained to Mr C. He also pointed out that, had the tooth been left in place, it would have fractured. We did not uphold Mr C's complaints as our investigation found no evidence to support his claims of inadequate and unnecessary treatment.