

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201302609, Forth Valley NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** appointments/admissions (delay, cancellation, waiting lists)  
**Outcome:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Miss C, who is a prisoner, complained that there was an unreasonable delay in her receiving dental treatment. She also complained because the prison doctor refused to review her pain medication.

The board told us that Miss C saw the dentist for treatment but she was missed for a follow-up appointment. They told us that this probably happened because the way the waiting list system operated had changed. Miss C saw the dentist again a little over five months after her initial appointment. We agreed this delay was unreasonable and we upheld Miss C's complaint. In addition, Miss C said in her complaint to the board that her pain medication was not helping. The board told her that the doctor had said it was not appropriate to review her medication before she had been seen by physiotherapy, and had advised that if she responded poorly to physiotherapy then her medication would be reviewed. We took independent advice on this from one of our medical advisers, who said that it was not acceptable for the prison doctor to refuse to review Miss C's pain medication only after she had been to physiotherapy, as she had indicated she was in pain and her medication was not helping. In light of that, we upheld the complaint.

### Recommendations

We recommended that the board:

- apologise for the delay in Miss C receiving further dental treatment; and
- take immediate steps to review Miss C's current pain medication and discuss the matter with her.