

SPSO decision report

Case: 201304079, A Dentist in the Lanarkshire NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C, who is an advice worker, complained on behalf of her client (Mrs A) about care and treatment provided by a dentist. Mrs A said that when she visited the dentist, he x-rayed her jaw and told her there was a gap in it, but it was nothing to worry about. However, Mrs A later found out she had a cancerous tumour which caused a break in her jaw bone, for which she needed treatment.

We looked at Mrs A's clinical records, and took independent advice from our dental adviser. We found that, based on the records, the dentist had provided adequate care and treatment in the circumstances. The dentist had told Mrs A that she had some bone loss in her jaw, and about the possible causes of mouth ulcers. He advised Mrs A to return after two weeks to check if her symptoms had improved. He had said that if the symptoms had not improved at the review appointment in two weeks' time, he would refer her to hospital for further investigations, which could include investigation for an oral tumour. However, even though the dental practice contacted Mrs A to arrange a review appointment, she did not return.