

SPSO decision report

Case: 201404670, A Dentist in the Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: lists (incl difficulty registering and removal from lists)
Outcome: some upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mr C attended his dentist for a routine check-up. During this check-up the dentist intended to scale and polish Mr C's teeth (a procedure where tartar build-up is removed from the gumline). Mr C refused, as a previous treatment had caused sensitivity to his teeth. The dentist advised Mr C that if he was unable to perform the treatment necessary then he could no longer provide treatment to Mr C and would remove him from his patient list.

Mr C complained that the dentist had not followed the correct procedures in de-registering him and the reason for de-registering him was unreasonable.

We sought independent advice from a dental adviser. The adviser explained the procedure for de-registering a patient, which involves contacting the local health board. The dentist was unable to provide evidence the correct procedure was followed and we upheld this complaint and made recommendations.

The adviser said that it was an individual clinical decision for the dentist to make about whether the relationship had broken down to the point where they could no longer treat the patient. Therefore, we did not uphold Mr C's second complaint.

Recommendations

We recommended that the dentist:

- revise the guidance on de-registering patients; and
- put in place a system for evidencing that the correct procedure is followed.