

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201406408, Shetland NHS Board  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** appointments / admissions (delay / cancellation / waiting lists)  
**Outcome:** some upheld, action taken by body to remedy, no recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained that the board had delayed in arranging an appointment for her to have a tooth extracted. She had seen a dentist from the board about the tooth and the dentist considered that the tooth needed to be taken out. Mrs C wanted to know if there was any way that the tooth could be saved and the dentist referred her to a consultant in restorative dentistry to discuss this. The consultant examined the tooth and then wrote to the dentist to say that the tooth should be taken out as soon as possible. After receiving the letter, the dentist contacted Mrs C to say that the tooth would be extracted at her next arranged appointment, a few weeks later. Mrs C considered that the tooth should have been extracted without delay. She contacted NHS 24 for advice over the following weekend and an emergency hospital appointment was arranged for her to have the tooth extracted.

We took independent advice on the complaint from a dental adviser. We found that it had been reasonable for the dentist to decide to wait until Mrs C's next appointment to extract the tooth. There was no evidence in the records to suggest that Mrs C was in such pain that an emergency appointment was required. We did not uphold this aspect of her complaint.

Mrs C also complained that the board had failed to phone her back when she contacted them for advice after the tooth had been taken out. There was no evidence that staff did call Mrs C back about this and we upheld this aspect of her complaint. We also upheld Mrs C's complaint about how the board had handled her complaint. However, we were satisfied that the board had apologised and learned lessons from these failings, and we did not make any recommendations.