

SPSO decision report

Case: 201407586, A Dental Practice in the Lothian NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: complaints handling
Outcome: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained to the practice about treatment that her son (Mr A) had received. She was unhappy with the response that she received and information that was provided about the principal dentist at the practice.

After investigating, we upheld Ms C's complaint. We considered that although the response to her complaint about treatment addressed her concerns adequately, there were a number of other complaints handling failings. We found that the response letter did not refer Ms C to us if she remained dissatisfied with her complaint and that the practice's complaints handling procedure was not in line with the relevant Scottish Government guidance. We also found that there had been a failure to advise Ms C of changes to the staff structure at the practice in a timely fashion.

Recommendations

We recommended that the practice:

- issue a written apology to Ms C, acknowledging the failings our investigation found;
- review staff training needs, to ensure complaints are appropriately coordinated and responded to; and
- review the complaints handling procedure to ensure that it reflects the requirements of the Scottish Government's 'Can I help you?' guidance.