

SPSO decision report

Case: 201507687, A Dentist in the Lothian NHS Board area
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Outcome: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Ms C complained to us that her dentist did not refer her to specialists in oral surgery to have her wisdom tooth extracted. She had attended a routine appointment with her dentist and explained that she had toothache in her bottom right wisdom tooth. An x-ray was taken but the dentist decided that, as there was no evidence of disease, the wisdom tooth did not need to be extracted. He therefore did not refer Ms C for dental surgery.

We took independent advice from a dental adviser. We found that the dentist had acted in line with the relevant guidelines, which state that impacted wisdom teeth that are free from disease should not be operated on. We did not uphold this aspect of her complaint.

Ms C also complained that the dentist did not tell her she would not be referred to have the wisdom tooth extracted. In response to our enquiries, the dentist told us that he had asked Ms C to wait in the waiting area for the results of the x-ray of her wisdom tooth. However, by the time he went to tell her the results, Ms C had already left the practice. The dentist left a note in her records that this was to be discussed with Ms C at her next visit. However, Ms C did not return to the dental practice.

We found that the dentist had acted reasonably in relation to this matter and we did not uphold the complaint.