

SPSO decision report

Case: 201507977, A Dentist in the Lothian NHS Board area

Sector: health

Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis

Outcome: not upheld, recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained about the treatment provided by her dentist. Mrs C said the treatment she received was unsatisfactory and as a result she had been left with problems with her teeth for which she held the practice responsible. Mrs C had attended two appointments with the dentist to undertake a crown preparation and the fitting of a temporary crown.

We took independent advice from a dental adviser who said there was no evidence to suggest the treatment which the dentist provided was of an unreasonable standard and the evidence was that the crown had been fitted satisfactorily. We accepted that advice and did not uphold Mrs C's complaint.

However, the adviser identified issues in relation to record-keeping concerning the dentist's discussions with Mrs C concerning her teeth and the suggested likely treatment options. There was no evidence in Mrs C's dental records of these discussions. The adviser said this was not in accordance with the standards contained in the General Dental Council's 'Standards for the Dental Team'.

The adviser also commented that because Mrs C saw the first dentist with an available appointment whenever she contacted the practice, she was seen and treated by six different dentists in the practice over several months. The adviser said this may have resulted in a failure in communication in that Mrs C was not provided with consistent messages and advice about her treatment, so we made a recommendation about this.

Recommendations

We recommended that the dentist:

- reflect on the comments of the adviser in relation to record-keeping; and
- work with other dentists in the practice to give consideration to ensuring that, where a patient is seen and treated by more than one dentist, appropriate processes are in place so that the patient is given consistent messages and advice about their dental treatment.