

SPSO decision report

Case: 201700157, Grampian NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

Miss C complained that the dental care and treatment she received at Aberdeen Dental School and Hospital was unreasonable.

Miss C was seen by the board's dentists over a period of approximately a year. She said that there was a lack of care, unacceptable waiting times, unhelpful and unsupportive staff, and poor communication. She also raised a specific concern about an appointment where a crown was fitted.

We took independent advice from a dentist. While we found that the board provided reasonable treatment in a number of areas, we found that some aspects of the care and treatment were unreasonable. We found that there was no unreasonable delay, and there was no evidence that staff were unhelpful or unsupportive or failed to communicate with Miss C. However, we had concerns that there was no evidence that Miss C was shown the crown when it was placed. We also found that Miss C's latex allergy had not been highlighted in the clinical letters, meaning a treatment area was not prepared appropriately before a procedure, although we noted that this procedure did not ultimately take place. On balance, we upheld Miss C's complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Miss C for failing to check the appearance of the crown with her before she was discharged. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at: <https://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance>.

What we said should change to put things right in future:

- Before patients leave hospital, staff should check that they are satisfied with their treatment and have no concerns.

We have asked the organisation to provide us with evidence that they have implemented the recommendations we have made on this case by the deadline we set.