

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201708954, A Dentist in the Grampian NHS Board area  
**Sector:** health  
**Subject:** clinical treatment / diagnosis  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

Mrs C complained about the care and treatment she received from her dentist. When Mrs C developed toothache, she was advised by a different dentist that her tooth needed to be extracted. Mrs C questioned why her tooth was left to decay to such an extent without any prior treatment. She complained that the first dentist failed to record the findings of an x-ray taken of her teeth which led to her tooth not being monitored properly. The dentist acknowledged that they did not record the findings of the x-ray, however they expected any subsequent dentist to review the patient's dental records, including the x-ray.

We took independent advice from a dentist. We found that it would not be reasonable to expect a subsequent dentist to review the x-ray, as they would expect a report of the findings to be included in the patient's records. We concluded that Mrs C's dentist had failed to record the findings of the radiograph in line with the relevant guidance, and we upheld the complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to Mrs C for failing to record the findings of the x-ray. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at: [www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance](http://www.spsso.org.uk/leaflets-and-guidance).

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

- Ensure knowledge and future compliance with the Radiation (Medical Exposure) Regulations (2000) and the Faculty of General Dental Practice guidance on Clinical Examination and Record Keeping Standards.
- Ensure knowledge of and future compliance with the Faculty of General Dental Practice guidance on Selection Criteria for Dental Radiography.
- The dentist should ensure full understanding and compliance with the Standards for the Dental Team.

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.