

## SPSO decision report



**Case:** 202002619, A Dentist in the Forth Valley NHS Board area  
**Sector:** Health  
**Subject:** Clinical treatment / Diagnosis  
**Decision:** upheld, recommendations

### Summary

C complained about the care and treatment that their child (A) received from a dentist at the dental surgery. C raised a number of concerns, including that the dentist failed to detect decay in A's tooth and provide appropriate treatment for this, and failed to carry out a radiograph (a type of dental x-ray) on A's tooth sooner.

We took independent advice from a dentist. We found that the dentist failed to record the presence of a mark on A's tooth during their third appointment, assess if there had been any deterioration of that mark, carry out further investigations and carry out radiographs at an earlier stage. We also found that the dentist's notes had extremely limited detail added and were below the expected standard. Given the failings in the detection and treatment of the decay in A's tooth and in carrying out a radiograph sooner, we upheld C's complaint.

### Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to A and C for failing to record the presence of the mark on A's tooth, assess if there had been any deterioration of that mark, carry out further investigations and carry out radiographs at an earlier stage. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at [www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets](http://www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets).

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

- In cases of this type, dentists should assess if there have been any deterioration of marks on patients' teeth and carry out further investigations, as appropriate.

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.