

SPSO decision report

Case: 201700753, Lanarkshire NHS Board
Sector: health
Subject: clinical treatment / diagnosis
Decision: not upheld, no recommendations

Summary

Mrs C complained to us about the treatment she received when she attended the emergency dental clinic at Wishaw General Hospital. Mrs C was experiencing pain from a left molar tooth and was scheduled to have root canal treatment carried out by her own dentist. Mrs C contacted NHS 24 and explained the problems she was experiencing and they made her an appointment at the clinic the following day. When she attended the clinic she said the dentist read the NHS 24 referral note, asked her a few questions, numbed her mouth, removed a nerve in a tooth, and put in place a temporary filling. When Mrs C returned home, the anaesthetic began to wear off and she looked in her mouth to discover the dentist had treated the wrong tooth and not the one which was scheduled to have root canal treatment. As a result she had to attend another NHS facility for emergency treatment on the correct tooth.

We took independent advice from an adviser in general dentistry and concluded that the dentist had taken note of Mrs C's dental history and the information contained in the NHS 24 referral, and had conducted an appropriate examination of her mouth. We found that the dentist had identified a tooth which was causing pain and that appropriate treatment was provided. We felt it was reasonable for the dentist to have treated the tooth which he had identified as causing a problem. While the tooth which was treated was not the one scheduled for root canal treatment, there was nothing to indicate that the tooth was incorrectly treated. We did not uphold the complaint.