

SPSO decision report

Case: 202007586, Tayside NHS Board
Sector: Health
Subject: Clinical treatment / Diagnosis
Decision: upheld, recommendations

Summary

C complained that the board failed to provide reasonable care and dental treatment to them over a period of several months. During clinical examinations, C raised concerns about experiencing pain from a particular tooth.

We took independent advice from a dentist. We found that while treatment provided by the dental practice was, in general, reasonable, there were some missed opportunities to further investigate the condition of the tooth in question. Further investigations would have been appropriate to help determine whether the tooth was the actual cause of the pain. We found that further information obtained at subsequent appointments would have helped confirm that C's pain was the result of a localised infection. The board accepted that in retrospect, the pain was due to the tooth that was ultimately extracted. Given the missed opportunities to further investigate the condition of the tooth in question, develop a more appropriate diagnosis and potentially reduce prolonging C's pain and discomfort, we upheld the complaint.

Recommendations

What we asked the organisation to do in this case:

- Apologise to C for the missed opportunities to further investigate the condition of the tooth in question, for the failure to develop a more appropriate diagnosis and potentially reduce prolonging C's pain and discomfort. The apology should meet the standards set out in the SPSO guidelines on apology available at www.spsso.org.uk/information-leaflets.

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

- Dentists should act in line with the Scottish Dental Clinical Effectiveness Programme's Management of Acute Dental Problems.

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.