

Tammy Lemke



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To whom it may concern

My name is Tammy Lemke and I work as a Dental Assistant/Receptionist for the
since 2006.

The dental surgery was participating in the Enhanced Primary Care program until the end of 2011. The dentists whom I work with have decided to stop running the program because of the Medicare Audit.

The dentists are very caring and genuine people who wish to help out less fortunate people due to illness and low socioeconomic situations. is an area in Adelaide that majority of the people living here fall into this category.

At the time that the EPC plan was implemented in the surgery the dentist felt that it was a good idea as this addressed the needs of the people that live in Elizabeth. The dentists worked very hard to accommodate for the people on this plan and our appointment books reflected that majority of the patients that we were helping out where the EPC care patients.

We had very long waiting list as all the paperwork was very comprehensive and our receptionist could not undertake all the work herself thus employed more staff. Since the dentists have decided not to accept these plans because of the involvement of the paperwork, we have had to let go of the staff member. Having such an influx of paper work has put a lot of stress on our staff, making our waiting list to be seen at least 6 to 10 weeks sometimes longer. Our staff had to deal with aggravated patients due to the long waiting times and explaining to patients that our dentists are no longer accepting the care plans. Some of our staff members have moved to other centres due to the stress of the paper work caused by the EPC program.

Many mistakes have also been caused by Medicare themselves giving out the wrong information to our staff members. When working on reception we have to call Medicare everyday to ensure the balance of the care plan has been reached and that the care plans are in place for dental.

One example is that the receptionist had been informed by Medicare that the patients care plan had been approved and the dentist commenced work on the patient, only later to find out that the patient had not been issued a care plan at all for dental and was only for podiatry.

Another common mistake by Medicare is that you speak to one person and they give a remaining balance of funds then you could ring back and speak to another person who gives you a different balance and expire date for the same patient. This has caused lots of errors and our company have had to "write off" lots of money due to Medicare error.

I believe that the program for the community is beneficial as it addresses many of the complaints of the residents of this area. It gives them confidence to smile again and perhaps seek employment therefore a bonus to the government. Many patients can eat again and not have constant pain. I believe that the dentists have done exceptional work and the patients will agree that they have benefited from the program. I also believe that by stopping the program this whole community will suffer greatly, there for causing more problems in the future.

Thank you for your time
Kind regards

Tammy Lemke