

WHY I LEFT PLANNED PARENTHOOD

by Sue Thayer

In 1991, Sue Thayer, a struggling mother living in a small, rural Iowa town, answered an ad for an entry-level assistant at a nearby Planned Parenthood facility. The job offered good benefits, was close to her home, and—to Sue's mind—promised an opportunity to help other women.

Within a couple of months, she had been promoted to office manager, a position she held for the next 17 years. Sue did the hiring, firing, and training, oversaw patient records and scheduling, maintained the building and the books. She enjoyed the family counseling side of the business, believing she was helping women who needed help. Opposed to abortion, she took solace in the fact that abortions weren't performed at the small facility where she worked.

But, as years passed, Sue found it harder to reconcile her conscience with the realities of Planned Parenthood's practices. She began to question other aspects of the corporation ... and to realize how much the business depends on abortions for its profits.

14 Alliance Defending Freedom



Visit AllianceDefendingFreedom.org/InvestigateTheirPlan to learn more about this ministry's efforts nationwide to expose the truth about Planned Parenthood and preserve the sanctity of life.

Planned Parenthood presents itself as a non-profit, but it's actually very profit-oriented. At monthly managers' meetings, those managing abortion facilities were given quotas, and those who didn't meet them had to provide a plan for increasing their numbers.

The company is just as high-pressured about selling birth control pills. Their contract with drug manufacturers lets them buy these pills in bulk at a big discount ... say, \$2.98 for one 28-day cycle's worth. When a woman asks for a cycle (often having seen ads for "Free Contraception"), Planned Parenthood contracts the bill to Medicaid—for \$35. But staff members are also urged to press the woman for a \$10 "donation" to help offset costs. (Many, feeling guilty, pay more.)

Planned Parenthood doesn't tell Medicaid about these women's contributions. So the company pockets two profits on each pill (one provided by the woman, the other by the taxpayers). If you multiply that by every woman who comes into each facility in the course of a day, you can quickly see the potential for huge profits. But they're not big enough to suit Planned Parenthood.

I had qualms about the pill billing, and I asked questions. But my real wake-up call came with the announcement at one of our monthly managers' meetings that all the facilities—including mine—would soon be offering something called "webcam abortions."

Webcam abortions work like this. A woman comes in for a pregnancy test. If it comes out positive, staff members are instructed to tell her, "We can take care of that for you today—in and out in 45 minutes." (Iowa has no waiting period for abortions.) If the woman agrees, she's shown into a room where an entry-level staffer—not a doctor, not a nurse—does a transvaginal ultrasound. The images are scanned to a doctor at a remote

location. If he decides that the baby in the womb is 70 days old or younger, and the woman wants the abortion, he pushes a button.

The button pops open a drawer in the exam room; inside are two sets of pills. The first she takes immediately; it chemically kills the baby. The second—taken at home a day later—initiates contractions to eject the dead baby from her body.

The woman is given a card with an 800 number on it, and told that if anything goes wrong, she can call and talk to a nurse. She isn't told that the nurse will simply refer her to the nearest ER—and suggest that, rather than mention the pills, she just say that she's having a miscarriage.

Planned Parenthood charges these women the same fee for a webcam abortion that they'd pay for seeing a doctor face-to-face. But since one doctor, sitting at a desk, can handle all these brief conversations with patients in several states—no nurse, no crash cart, no travel expenses—the company can cut costs to the bone. Managers are urged to aggressively sell as many women as possible on these low-cost, high-profit chemical abortions—no matter the danger to the women.

In 2013, Iowa's Board of Medicine passed a regulation requiring that a doctor perform a physical pre-examination of any abortion patient, be on hand in person when abortion drugs are given, and do a follow-up exam after the abortion. But the Iowa Supreme Court (urged on by Planned Parenthood) issued an injunction allowing the company to ignore those directives while the legality of the regulation is debated in the courts. Meanwhile, Planned Parenthood attorneys continue to make it clear that the company's real concern is its bottom line, not women's health.

“Managers are urged to aggressively sell as many women as possible on these low-cost, high-profit chemical abortions—no matter the danger to the women.”

I was the proverbial frog in the kettle who finally realized the water was boiling. It wasn't until Planned Parenthood was about to begin training me in how to facilitate webcam abortions that I realized, "I can't do this." I called our local Right to Life office, and told them all about the webcam strategy. Surely they could do something that would block these abortions from happening.

The Iowa Right to Life people found it hard to believe the webcam idea was for real, but I finally convinced them enough that they put me in touch with Alliance Defending Freedom. An ADF attorney came to Des Moines to meet me. I was nervous: I'd never thought of "Christian" and "attorney" in the same sentence before. But I found the ADF team to be made up of godly people who truly stood for life, and would help me stand up for it, too. They've been an inspiration to me.

I left Planned Parenthood in 2008. They asked me to sign a paper promising never to tell what I knew of the inside workings of the company. But God put it on my heart not to do that. Instead, I became an active part of 40 Days for Life, praying for the closure of the clinic I once managed. Praise God, it's now closed. We hope to replace it with a Pregnancy Help Center.

God continues to give me opportunities to speak out against the evils of abortion, and about Planned Parenthood's disregard for the health and safety of women. If, in His mercy, He can use me to make a difference, think how much more He might use you. ▲