



# Sharon Gail McMillan

## Denial of Care Horror Story

*“They won’t let me get better.  
They don’t want me to get well.  
They just want me to go away.”*

**About Sharon:** Sharon was born and raised in Fresno.

**Her Family:** Sharon married and had a son, Scott, and a daughter, Kelly. She moved to Monterey, where she lived for 25 years, before returning to Fresno. Sharon was a youthful mother who liked the same music and movies as her kids. She enjoyed her family more than anything else, especially big holiday get-togethers, for which she baked awesome German Chocolate Cake.

**Her Job and What Happened:** Sharon worked as a medical biller, and was a healthy 54-year-old the day she slipped on a piece of ice at work. She fell, badly twisting her leg. Sharon knew immediately that she had injured her knee. She was instructed to see a doctor chosen by her employer. By the time of her appointment, Sharon’s knee was swollen and painful, and she was unable to put weight on that leg. After a quick visual exam (no tests), the company doctor diagnosed her injury as a sprain and ordered rest. After several weeks with no improvement, Sharon sought, to no avail, to get a second opinion and hopefully an x-ray or MRI. Homebound while waiting and fighting for a correct diagnosis (Sharon had completely detached one of the ligaments in her knee), Sharon fell in the shower and injured her back. Again, bed rest and pain killers were all that were offered to “heal” this new injury. Months passed before her knee was finally repaired, still leaving Sharon almost completely bedridden, in pain in spite of the heavy painkillers doctors prescribed. Financially, and emotionally, these injuries took their toll. After several months, she was diagnosed as having ruptured three discs in her back when she fell. Surgery was necessary - but Sharon was instead referred to a pain specialist. After five doctors recommended surgery, and the insurer continuing to deny coverage, Sharon was forced into binding arbitration. Three and a half years after her original injury, Sharon finally had major back surgery that included installing several metal braces and screws.

## How the Workers’ Comp Law Affected Her

Sharon spent the 4.5 years after her simple slip and fall in pain and almost bedridden, fighting for every doctor’s appointment, every test, and a correct diagnosis. Her body was deteriorating from inactivity and reliance on prescription pain medications. Stress from fighting her insurance provider, constant worry over her ever-worsening financial situation and whether she would ever work again took their toll. She had missed years of family gatherings for birthdays, weddings, holidays and vacations. Sharon developed pneumonia, too weak from her battles to fight off the infection, Sharon died, leaving behind two kids, a grandchild, a sister, her ailing mother and many friends.

[www.VotersInjuredatWork.org](http://www.VotersInjuredatWork.org)

For more information, please contact Mark Hayes at 714/396-5260 or email to [oneinjuredworker@aol.com](mailto:oneinjuredworker@aol.com)