To: Dr. Erika Paterson, Professor of ENGL301 Technical Writing

From: Karissa Garneau, Student of ENGL301 Technical Writing

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Subject: Proposal for Improving Green Initiatives at The Tooth Gallery Dental Office in Ottawa.

**Introduction**

Dental offices are significant contributors to environmental waste. Whereas some efforts for repurposing can be made, a large portion of dental materials available on the market are not designed to be reused or recycled. Waste containing metals and hazardous substances are typically properly disposed of due to standards and guidelines set by the ministry of health. Yet single-use plastics, disposable items, and plastic wraps and barriers have only increased in popularity following the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Statement of Problem**

Waste management is a growing ecologic concern as landfills overflow and begin to run out of space. Dental office waste can cause the introduction of toxic chemicals into our water systems and landfills. Client-specific dental services are performed typically involving the manipulation of oral tissues, often producing biological fluids which are removed by use of dental materials. These are the materials in question that account for the largest portion of dental waste.

**Proposed Solutions**

An important first step to improving green initiatives in a dental office is to create an individualized, environmental action plan. The office will have the best success in maintaining better environmental choices by having all members of the team following the same protocols. By making thoughtful choices to order more sustainable products and consider how each product can be best utilized, the Tooth Gallery can reduce its ecological footprint.

**Scope**

To assess the feasibility of the proposed changes, the following survey questions will be distributed to dental offices and account for the bulk of data assessed.

* What are you currently doing to reduce environmental waste in your dental office?
* What kind of training has your team received in waste management?
* How many staff currently work in the dental office?
* How do you dispose of hazardous waste and silver/mercury/lead?
* How do you dispose of unsoiled, used treatment gloves and masks?
* How does the office clean non-treatment areas: floors, waiting room, bathrooms, staff areas?
* How many garbage bags on average are removed from your dental office in a typical week? Does this seem like a fair amount?
* What could be done to improve green initiatives in your dental office?

**Methods**

Primary sources of data will be collected by way of interviewing staff members of the dental office. Open-ended questions are asked to allow subjects to provide further clarification to the questions in their own words. Secondary sources of data include background knowledge and reference to publications regarding environmental waste in dental offices.

**My Qualifications**

As a registered dental hygienist and self-proclaimed environmentalist, I believe I am more than qualified to improve green initiatives within a dental office. I have worked in many dental offices and seen an array of varied environmental preferences among staff and more importantly, employers. While there are offices that make efforts to reduce environmental waste, the sheer number of dental offices in rural cities alone is a cause for concern.

**Conclusion**

It is evident that dental offices produce a large ecological footprint. There are more sustainable choices that can be made to reduce environmental waste and reduce carbon emissions. By implementing a successful environmental action plan in this dental office, other dental professionals may be encouraged to make greener choices in their own offices.