

NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Saskatoon, SK Day 2

April 21, 2023

EVIDENCE

Witness 5: Stephanie Foster

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[00:00:00]

Shawn Buckley

I'm pleased to announce our first witness this afternoon is Stephanie Foster. Stephanie, can I begin by asking you to state your full name for the record and spell your first and last name, please.

Stephanie Foster

Stephanie Foster, S-T-E-P-H-A-N-I-E F-O-S-T-E-R.

Shawn Buckley

And Stephanie, do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?

Stephanie Foster

I do.

Shawn Buckley

Now, just to introduce you to people, you have worked as a legal assistant in the past?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And then you went on to become a teacher assistant?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And you had been back and forth between Ontario because the father of your children lives in Saskatoon?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. Now, when you were a teacher assistant, my understanding is there was a requirement by your employer that you get vaccinated?

Stephanie Foster

Yes. I had to get vaccinated or I wasn't able to do my job.

Shawn Buckley

Can you tell us what happened with your vaccination?

Stephanie Foster

I had to get vaccinated or I would lose my job. Then also, at the time, my uncle had terminal cancer. So, my family wanted us to get my children and I vaccinated so we could come see our family. As well, as my children needed to fly back and forth from Ontario to Saskatchewan. So, they needed to be vaccinated to fly back and forth.

Shawn Buckley

Right. So, what happened to you personally after you were vaccinated?

Stephanie Foster

After I was vaccinated the first time?

Shawn Buckley

Yes, so maybe tell us about both shots.

Stephanie Foster

Pardon?

Shawn Buckley

Tell us about both shots.

Stephanie Foster

Both shots?

Shawn Buckley

Yeah.

Stephanie Foster

Okay, so my second shot, I had got it on July 11th, 2021. And after that, on August 13th, 2021, I had a seizure. I do have epilepsy; however, my last seizure was in 1999. So I do believe that the COVID shot has given me seizures again, or brought them back.

Shawn Buckley

I'll just put that in perspective: when you last had a seizure, you were 18.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

You're now 40. It was 22 years between the two.

Stephanie Foster

Right. And then, I also had my first booster shot at the end of January of 2022. And the end of February of 2022, I had a seizure again. Both times of those seizures, I had also lost my license.

Shawn Buckley

So the Motor Vehicle Branch would take away your license because they're worried you have epilepsy again.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Now, did you have a problem after your second shot, with blacking out and falling down?

Stephanie Foster

Yes, I would get dizzy sometimes—I still do—and have blackouts and fall down. Just not really shaking like seizures, but just episodes that just don't make any sense.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. And when you say blackout, basically you lose the ability to see? Or what are you describing when you say blackout?

Stephanie Foster

Blackouts, sometimes, where I just can't see. And sometimes, I'll have a blackout where I'll just fall down.

Shawn Buckley

And had that ever happened to you before you were vaccinated?

Stephanie Foster

No.

Shawn Buckley

So that was something that was brand new.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Now, your mother's deceased now, but her name was Carol Pearce?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And my understanding is that your mother, Carol, was at Shopper's Drug Mart to get basically her booster shot?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Can you tell us what your experience of that was?

[00:05:00]

Stephanie Foster

My mom was visiting me at my house that day and she had asked me if I would go with her to get the booster shot. I had begged her not to get it and told her I believed it was giving me seizures. She said she wanted to get it because she felt she needed to keep up with the Joneses and she just felt like it was something she had to do to keep everybody safe.

So she went—and I had given her a birthday present that day, an early birthday present—and she was supposed to come back after her shot. She left and when she was at Shopper's,

right after she got the shot, she texted me and told me she was waiting her 15 minutes. And I said, "Good job." And then, I think it was about seven minutes later— She died.

Shawn Buckley

What's the next thing that happened with you, because your mother obviously stopped texting. How did you find out that there was something wrong?

Stephanie Foster

My brother phoned me and he told me. This was about 45 minutes after my mom left my house. My brother phoned me and said, "Mom's in an ambulance and the ambulance driver said, 'get to the hospital and expect the worst." My brother said he's on his way to pick me up. I just started screaming, "No! No, this isn't right!" And they picked me up. All the way to the hospital, I prayed to God that she was alive. Then I got to the hospital. Right away I asked them, "I want to go see my mom," and they wouldn't let me in. They kept telling me I had to wait; I had to wait. I just didn't understand why I had to wait. They told me I had to wait for a social worker. I didn't understand because I thought, you know, a nurse would just come and bring me to her. So I just had a feeling right then that something wasn't right.

Finally, a social worker came and took us into this room and told me that a doctor was going to come and talk to us. I just had a feeling right then that it wasn't good; it wasn't good. I couldn't stop crying. And two doctors came into the room. All I heard was the one doctor said, "She's gone." I didn't hear anything else of what the doctor's saying because my mind just blacked out. I just started crying hysterically, and I just said, "I want to see my mom."

So a lady took me to see my mom. I just laid there with my mom and I kept telling her to wake up. She wouldn't wake up. Then, the doctors said I could stay with her until the coroner came. And then the coroner came and she sat beside me and I kept saying—I was screaming out loud to the doctors, to the coroner, to everybody, saying—

[00:10:00]

"The shot killed my mom! The shot killed my mom!" Like, there was no way the shot did not kill my mom.

My mom was healthy, she was super healthy, there was no health problems with my mom at all. When she left my house that day, she was perfectly fine. Then she got that shot, then she died. Seven minutes after, she died. And I see her in the hospital right after and she was gone. So I kept telling them that it was the shot; it was the shot. The coroner hadn't even looked at my mom, hadn't even touched my mom. She just sat there right beside me in the chair. I said, "No, it's the shot," and the coroner said, "No, it's natural causes."

And I knew right then: You're lying. You're lying to me. There's no way you know that.

Shawn Buckley

Sorry, I turned my mic off.

There's actually video footage of your mother coming to your house that day and then leaving that day [Exhibits SA-8 and SA-8a].

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Just because your neighbour has a security camera that's motion sensor.

Stephanie Foster

Yeah.

Shawn Buckley

I'm just going to find those. So, David, can you set up so that my computer is showing up on the screen? I'm just going to go back to the beginning.

So, that's your mother there in the red jacket?

Stephanie Foster

Yeah.

Shawn Buckley

And so, that's her coming to your house that day. And I'm just going to play it again because you've told us that she's healthy and it looks like she's just walking normally.

And, now, I'm going to play the video of your mother leaving. And so, this will just be minutes. This is her on her way to Shopper's Drug Mart. And I'll just play that again. I just want people to watch to see: she appears to be just a healthy, normal person. That's what you were describing is just, your mother was a normal, healthy person at the time.

Stephanie Foster

Yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Now, after this happened, some people reached out to you on Facebook. Am I right about that?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And David, if you can just pull up my computer screen again. Now, you sent me basically, a Facebook string [Exhibit SA-8c]. And this is from your phone. Am I right?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

I'm just going to scroll down. This is actually the text conversation, the last text conversation you had with your mother.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

She had texted you on this thing, "Book your COVID shot and come with me. Shoppers on Herald." And you text back, "I don't want another one." And she texts, "Okay." And then you text, "You coming over?" And she says, "Waiting the 15 minutes, LOL." And you say, "Good job." And she says, "Thanks." And that's the last communication you ever had with your mother.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And I'm sorry to be upsetting you with this, but we so appreciate you sharing. I'm just going to scroll down a little more because this Wendy Janzen reached out to you on Facebook. My understanding is a few people reached out to you on Facebook who either were there or had heard about what happened from others who were there?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

I expect there was more conversation than this, but Wendy Janzen writes to you on Facebook. "Three days ago in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, a friend's grown daughter was standing in line with her son at the pharmacy. They saw a long line of people waiting for the needle. A woman received the needle and collapsed immediately; help arrived quickly and she could not be revived. Everyone else just stayed in the lineup for their turn."

[00:15:00]

Am I correct that you heard that from other sources, also? That, basically, people stayed in line to continue getting the shot.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

I'm also going to play—it's difficult to hear, but it's the 911 recording [Exhibit SA-8b].

Stephanie, you sent me one; I clipped the talking before and after, so we're just down to the 911 clip. It's difficult to hear but I just want to play it, because you sent it because they actually refer to the COVID shot as being a cause.

David, you might have to crank the volume up and I'm just going to start playing that. I apologize everyone, it is a little difficult. Oh, that didn't work, did it? Do you have that 911 one? That's not the— We'll let David play it on his system.

[Audio recording 911 call, mostly inaudible]

Shawn Buckley

I'm sorry, Stephanie, I know that's difficult to hear that. But I thank you for sharing that. That was at least the paramedics reporting that it was the COVID shot. I appreciate they're not doctors. Yeah. Thanks, David.

Now, something else happened and that followed afterwards. Because this created a bit of discussion in Saskatoon. People were concerned about what happened to your mother. And my understanding is that, so a couple of days after your mother died, somebody went to the pharmacy with just kind of the intention of seeing how they were going to respond to questions about your mother. Does that sound right?

Stephanie Foster

Right. Yep.

Shawn Buckley

You were able to get a copy of this and you've sent this to us.

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, so, David, I'll ask you to play that. And so, just so people understand, this is not Stephanie. This is somebody else who's just decided to go back to the pharmacy and see how they would respond. Well, first of all— The first question and answer, listen carefully too, it's really interesting.

[Video] Unknown Speaker

Do you guys do COVID shots here?

Pharmacy Employee

We do. We don't do walk-ins. It's an appointment. If you want, I can give you our QR code and you can sign up for it.

Unknown Speaker

I have a question regarding the safety of it. Have you had any issues, recently, with anybody?

Pharmacy Employee

Yeah, I mean, like, there is the possibility for side effects.

Unknown Speaker

Like, what kind of side effects?

Pharmacy Employee

Um, sore arm, fever, that kind of thing.

Unknown Speaker

I heard that somebody died here two days ago right after that.

Pharmacy Employee

We aren't commenting on that.

Unknown Speaker

Why? If I want to get a shot, shouldn't I know these things first?

Pharmacy Employee

We're not commenting on that, that's what my manager told us.

Unknown Speaker

When you have to get a medicine, don't you have to let people know?

Pharmacy Employee

That's not the case with a privacy issue, I'm not allowed to do that.

Unknown Speaker

Okay, I'm going to hold off because I heard somebody died.

[Video Ends]

Shawn Buckley

Now, Stephanie, you've shared with us symptoms that you had following the shots, before your mother died. But my understanding is just the mental shock and grief of what happened has led to some further medical complications?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Can you share with us those, please?

Stephanie Foster

I've gone through quite a bit of trauma.

[00:20:00]

When my mom first passed, for at least the first four months, I was basically numb. I couldn't accept the fact that my mom was gone. I couldn't sleep. I maybe could get an hour's sleep. I couldn't take care of myself. I couldn't take care of my kids. I have severe fibromyalgia, severe PTSD. My health has just deteriorated so badly. I've gained a lot of weight. I've just basically gone completely downhill.

I've had a period where I went three weeks where I couldn't even talk. I couldn't even walk. And if I did talk, I sounded like a robot. It would hurt to talk. I went to the hospital twice. They didn't know what was wrong with me. They did CAT scans. They did all kinds of tests. They just sent me home with pain meds. And I saw three different doctors in the walk-in clinic. Same thing. They looked me over. They didn't know what was wrong with me. Sent me home with pain meds.

So I was scared. My family was scared. We all thought that I was never going to get my speech back, that I would never be able to walk again. I was looking into sign language and had my kids look into sign language. And then eventually, I started slowly being able to speak again. Slowly being able to walk again. Still a little bit difficult to walk. Now, the doctors are saying that I need surgery done on my spine.

So it's just one thing after another after another. And it's just, they say— I've been to a neurologist. I've been to every kind of doctor, except a psychiatrist, because every doctor I go to says I need to see a psychiatrist. Now the problem is that I don't have a psychiatrist I can see yet.

Shawn Buckley

When we were watching that video that somebody had done, when they went back to the pharmacy and they asked if there's any side effects, and the lady said, "Yeah, basically soreness in the arm and fever," I know that would have upset you to hear.

If you could say something to the pharmacy concerning your mother, what message would you have for them?

Stephanie Foster

I want to know why they didn't help her. Why didn't anybody help her? Why did everybody just stand in line? It doesn't make any sense. I feel like she could have been helped. I feel like she could have been saved. I was told by people that everybody just stood there and by the time somebody came there, they checked her pulse and there was no pulse. I believe that if somebody got to her right away, instead of everybody just standing around, they could have done CPR and brought her back.

Shawn Buckley

And I understood it's been reported to you by several people that the line just kept going forward and people kept getting jabbed.

Stephanie Foster

Yes. I feel like they just left her there, like she was nothing; like she was just a nobody. Like, "Come on, next! Who's next? Come on, let's just get on with it."

And that breaks my heart so badly.

[00:25:00]

And then it was afterwards when the doctors and everybody is saying natural causes. No. She did not die from natural causes. And that makes me very upset because I felt like they just wanted to brush my mom under the rug and that was it.

No. My mom is a person and a wonderful person, and she should not just be brushed under the rug and forgotten about and say "natural causes" because nobody wants to say that she died from the COVID shot. And she did!

Shawn Buckley

Do you know what they listed on the death certificate as cause of death?

Stephanie Foster

They said that she had a massive heart attack. And that she died instantly. My mom never had anything wrong with her heart, ever.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you. I have no further questions but the commissioners might have some questions for you.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you very much for your very touching testimony. Did you ask for an autopsy for your mother?

Stephanie Foster

Pardon me?

Commissioner Massie

Did you ask to get an autopsy?

Stephanie Foster

Yes.

Commissioner Massie

Did you get the result?

Stephanie Foster

My brother has it.

Commissioner Massie

And what does it say?

Stephanie Foster

I believe it says, "massive heart attack." I haven't got to actually see the report.

Commissioner Massie

Is there a plan to do further investigation in the tissue of her heart to find out what triggered it?

Stephanie Foster

I'm not sure because my brother has the actual documents and I haven't been able to get access to them.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

I'm sorry for your loss. Did you get anybody at the drugstore reach out to you at all?

Stephanie Foster

Pardon?

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Did anyone at the drugstore reach out to you?

Stephanie Foster

No.

Commissioner Kaikkonen

Thank you.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you, so we have no further questions.

Stephanie, actually, I commend your bravery to come here. I know that it was difficult. And on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry, I sincerely thank you for sharing this with us.

Stephanie Foster

Thank you.

[00:28:16]

Final Review and Approval: Jodi Bruhn, August 21, 2023.

The evidence offered in this transcript is a true and faithful record of witness testimony given during the National Citizens Inquiry (NCI) hearings. The transcript was prepared by members of a team of volunteers using an "intelligent verbatim" transcription method.

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