



## NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Saskatoon, SK

Day 3

April 22, 2023

### EVIDENCE

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**Witness 8: Carrie Sakamoto**

Full Day 3 Timestamp: 07:50:40–08:08:35

Source URL: <https://rumble.com/v2jsozo-national-citizens-inquiry-saskatoon-day-3.html>

[00:00:00]

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Next witness will be Carrie Sakamoto, by video. There she is.

Carrie, can you hear me? Can you hear me? Say something so I can hear you.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I can hear you. I am having difficulty seeing you. They've been having all kinds of trouble with this link here. There we go. I see you.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. Carrie, first of all, give me your full name and then spell it for me and then I'll do an oath with you.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

My name is Carrie Sakamoto. It's spelled C-A-R-R-I-E S-A-K-A-M-O-T-O.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

And Carrie, do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony today?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I do.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Carrie, you live in Lethbridge, correct?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Yes.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. And I guess we're going to talk about an injury that you suffered from the vaccine today. Let's go back to when you had the vaccine and why. What year was it? Do you recall?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I got my first vaccine, which was AstraZeneca, April 21st, 2021.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. And that was AstraZeneca?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Correct.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. And was that a single dose regimen, or was it two?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

It was one dose and then it was taken out of Alberta. So I had to choose a second vaccine, which I chose Pfizer.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

You had a second dose as well and that second dose was Pfizer?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Correct.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. When approximately was that?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

That was June 18th, 2021.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

And when did you start having effects?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I got sick that evening along with my husband. We both had flu-like symptoms. We were told to expect this. We were also told to expect the unexpected because we were mixing

vaccines. There had been things in the media saying it was fine, there were things saying they weren't so sure. At this point, we didn't have a choice. I already had AstraZeneca. I had to pick another one. I picked Pfizer.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

And who was it that told you, "Expect the unexpected?"

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Friends and family.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Yeah, so I got my vaccine and I got sick that evening. But it was fever, nausea, achy body: just like a regular flu. I spent the next few days in bed. But my husband had the exact same symptoms, so I didn't really think too much of it until about the seventh day. And he was better and I was getting worse.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. So keep going.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

So by the seventh day, I had a really bad fever. I had a really bad headache and I had swollen tonsils on the right side. I called my doctor to make an appointment. But because I had a sore throat and this was still in the beginning of COVID, I couldn't be seen in person. So she called me, I explained what was happening. She said that most likely I had tonsil stones from fever from my vaccine. She put me on antibiotics. She said if I wasn't better in three days to call her back.

The next evening, I was being taken to hospital by my husband. My brain felt like it was on fire, is the only way I can explain it.

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And because of the pain, I started vomiting and I couldn't stop. This went on for about 24 hours. But at this point, I'd been sick for eight or nine days and had hardly eaten because it really affected my throat. So I was pretty sick by this time. My husband took me into the hospital. They gave me medication for migraine and things like Gravol to stop the vomiting, which worked. So I went home. I was sent home. They said if anything changed to come back.

After that medication wore off, all the symptoms came rushing back. My husband took me back to the hospital. And on the way, as I was looking in the mirror, I saw my face start to drop. I thought I was having a stroke.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. Was your heart rate up?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I'm not sure if my heart rate was up. All I could see was that my face was dropping—and just the one side. My mom had had a stroke when I was young, so I was familiar with what it looked like. And that's immediately what I thought was happening.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

So you were on the way to the hospital, though. What did they say when you got there?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

They admitted me and hooked me up to some IVs to try and stop the vomiting. They said they believed that it was Bell's palsy.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Oh. Did they explain to you what that was and how long it would—?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

They said it was facial paralysis and that it should resolve itself soon. But because I was so sick, they kept me in the hospital for a few days, which turned into being 17 days. When I was in the hospital— Sorry, I just need to look at my notes here. It's a lot.

I was admitted into the hospital and I want to say about day three, or four, maybe even five, I was still very, very sick. I was in and out of sleep, sleeping a lot. When the Bell's palsy hit, my eye was paralyzed. I had a patch on my eye, my tongue was swollen and half paralyzed, and half of my esophagus, so I wasn't able to swallow. So I was given a feeding tube at this point because I was losing so much weight so fast, because I'd been sick ten, fifteen days at this point.

While I was in hospital, they had restrictions still. So I was only allowed a couple of people in—my husband and my mother and not at the same time. But one of these mornings, I want to say day five, a nurse came in and asked if somebody from Alberta Health Services could come and see me. I awoke to find a lady standing there. I was still very sick. She didn't say anything. She just stood there for a while staring at me and then left. I thought that was really strange—and I'll show you where it applies later on in my story.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. Did anyone tell you where or how you had gotten this palsy?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Yes. So while I was in hospital, I had a lot of specialists. I had MRIs, CAT scan, ultrasounds: I mean, you name it, I had it. And the doctor who was treating me, who's a pretty well-known doctor, he came to my bedside with a laptop. And it was split-screened and there was probably eight or nine other doctors on there. And he asked if they could see me and speak

to me because they had never actually seen somebody or spoken to somebody with full-bloom Bell's palsy as severe as mine.

So after he spoke with these people, it was their opinion that Pfizer had done this to me. Pfizer was in my body and it was fighting against me for some reason.

[00:10:00]

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Did they give you a prognosis as to how long this was going to last, how severe it was going to be, that type of thing? What did they tell you?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

They said it was a new type of Bell's palsy because it was caused by this vaccine and that they didn't know what was going to happen. They figured, most likely I would go back to the way I was, that it would resolve itself, but they didn't know. My neurologist said that usually anything after a year is permanent.

And I sit here today at two years and I still have the full facial paralysis, the paralysis on my throat, the entire side of my body. I have hearing loss that requires a hearing aid now. I have vertigo on both sides. I have a lot of neurological problems. I have memory loss from trauma. I mean, the list kind of goes on and on. But the doctors are the ones who told me specifically that it was Pfizer that was doing this damage to my body.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

All right.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

After I got out of the hospital, I received a phone call from Alberta Health Services telling me that it was safe to take the booster.

I'm not sure why they called me. They've done it twice. Nobody else I've spoken to has ever received a call from Alberta Health Services saying to go get a vaccine or a booster of any kind. It makes me feel like an experiment. It's frustrating and it's scary. I literally said to the woman, "I am still injured from my first vaccine. How can you say this is safe?" She simply replied, "It just is." But that's not a good enough answer for me, so I'm still looking for answers.

I was lucky, all of my doctors have been on board from day one: my neurologists, my specialists. They all were the ones who told me that this is what was happening to me. So I applied to the vaccine injury program [Vaccine Injury Support Program]. After 20 months, I have been accepted and I was given a lump sum of money and continued medical care.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

So are they still reimbursing you for care at this point? I gather you had been on a farm and you have now moved to town because of all of this.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I couldn't drive. I had zero independence, and my kids were— We were all stuck out on the farm when my husband would go to work. I couldn't work. I didn't have a job when this happened but my family needed me and I wasn't able to help out, so the only option was to sell our farm.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Are you still being supported by the injury program, or is that all over?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Yeah.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

It's continued care. I was only accepted on March 3rd.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Of this year? Of 2023?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Yeah, yes.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

And is that all going satisfactorily? They're paying for your care?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

So far, yes.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay. Is there anything you want to tell us about this ordeal of yours that I haven't mentioned yet?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I did want to say: When this first happened to me, I really wanted to share what was going on with me. And I reached out to all the news stations thinking, "They're going to want to cover this story. They're going to want to see. The doctors should know what's happening, and then if somebody else turns up in the emergency room like me, they can be helped instead of turned away three times." But I was met with resistance.

And that's actually when I met Mr. Harding. And I'm the one he did the story about that I just found out was related to him being let go from his job.

I just wanted my story to be heard, so I went to TikTok,

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and there I was able to share my story. And I have a small following of about 11,000 people who really want answers as well. They're waiting to see how this is going to play out. But I want to know why I can go to the news station and speak about long COVID, if I had a story about if this was long COVID, but when you say, "vaccine injury," even though I have been approved, they don't want to speak about anything negative. So people like me are being forced to be quiet.

And I kind of— Part of the reason I wanted to do this was to give them a voice through me.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

At this point, I'm going to ask the commissioners if anyone has any questions for this witness? Yeah, Dr. Massie.

**Commissioner Massie**

Well, thank you very much for sharing your really sad story with us.

Let me make sure I understood exactly the conversation you had with Alberta Health Services. They first came to see you in the hospital to watch you? Did they engage in any conversation with you at that point?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

No.

**Commissioner Massie**

And then when you left the hospital after the doctor had acknowledged that you've been vax-injured, you received a phone call from Alberta Health Services telling you that the booster is okay for you?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

That it was safe, yeah.

**Commissioner Massie**

Do you know the name of the person that actually gave you this medical advice?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

I wish I had wrote that down and I am going to look through some more notes, but I didn't. And they called twice but I didn't think of doing that.

**Commissioner Massie**

Is there a way for you to get back to them and tell them clearly, how can it be safe when you are compensated by the government that acknowledges your vax injury?

**Carrie Sakamoto**

That's also part of the reason why I wanted to come here and speak, because I would like some answers to that.

**Commissioner Massie**

Thank you.

**Wayne Lenhardt**

Okay, anyone else? Okay, on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry, I want to thank you very much for your testimony today and good luck.

**Carrie Sakamoto**

Thank you.

[00:17:54]



***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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