



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Vancouver, BC

Day 3

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EVIDENCE

Witness 11: Paul Hollyoak

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Shawn Buckley

So I'd like to introduce our next witness, Paul Hollyoak. Paul, can you hear me?

Paul Hollyoak

Yes, I can.

Shawn Buckley

And do you have video on your computer or phone there?

Paul Hollyoak

Yes, it was showing. I'm just looking.

Shawn Buckley

Because we're just seeing your name. So I think there's, there we go.

Paul Hollyoak

There we go.

Shawn Buckley

There we go. That's much better. We can see you. Thank you.

Can you please state your full name for the record? Spelling you first and last name.

Paul Hollyoak

Full name is Paul Hollyoak, spelled P-A-U-L H-O-L-L-Y-O-A-K. No middle name.

Shawn Buckley

And, Paul, do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Paul Hollyoak

I do.

Shawn Buckley

Now, my understanding is that you have worked twenty-eight years with the Coast Guard, eighteen of those years as a rescue specialist. Can you share with us briefly what a rescue specialist is?

Paul Hollyoak

A rescue specialist is a certification that a Coast Guard individual can get, and it involves operating a fast response vessel. There's some medical training involved. The placement is usually on a ship or a lifeboat, and the rescue specialist is usually responsible for deck duties.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. I just want people to understand you were one of those guys for eighteen years that went out there when no one should be out there to save lives.

Paul Hollyoak

That's correct.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. Now you ended up, because you're a government employee, being subject to these mandates for vaccination. And my understanding is that mandate for you came in, in the fall of 2021. You put things off as long as you could, but you ended up getting vaccinated in November and then December of 2021. Is that right?

Paul Hollyoak

That is correct, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Can you share with us what happened after you became vaccinated?

Paul Hollyoak

Within the first couple of months after being vaccinated, I started to have low energy levels and difficulty breathing. Some of this I attributed to the fact that I was now in a desk job, rather than being as active on the water as I usually am. And so the energy level and breathing decreased over a period of time. I'm still having trouble with both of those situations. By May of 2022, I started to develop inflammation in my joints. So my hands

were first to the point where there was a time when I could not use my hands at all. My knees—

Shawn Buckley

So let me just stop you there and have you flesh that out. So what do you mean you couldn't use your hands at all?

Paul Hollyoak

It was extremely painful from my wrist all the way out to my fingers. So gripping things. I couldn't lift anything of any significance. And we're talking about not even being able to lift something that's like, being able to grip it: it was the grip, at that point, which was a problem, not even something that was like a 20-pound object.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, so basically, you can't lift things. So that's pretty well disabling you as a person at that point.

Paul Hollyoak

Yes, yeah, definitely. It's extremely frustrating—when I've been on the water saving lives and fixing problems for people—and not being able to open a jam jar,

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or sometimes even a plastic wrapper could present problems for me at home.

Shawn Buckley

Right, okay. And you were also talking about inflammation in your knees and feet. Can you share with us about that?

Paul Hollyoak

Yep, so the inflammation in my knees makes it extremely difficult to be up on my feet for any length of time. It's also, even right now, I can feel my knees. If I sit in one spot for too long, then being able to switch to a different position can be extremely painful as well.

Shawn Buckley

Are you able to walk far?

Paul Hollyoak

Not extremely far, no. Not compared to what I used to do, prior to vaccination. I was a skier; I was on ski patrol and I used to hike a lot. That's not possible now. I can take the dog for a fifteen- to twenty-minute walk. That's about my ability to get out and about.

Shawn Buckley

Right, okay, so carry on. My understanding is that some other things suffered after the vaccination. So for example, can you tell us about your cognitive abilities?

Paul Hollyoak

Yeah, by August anyway, if not July of 2022, I started to find it difficult to be able to handle tasks like troubleshooting, also being able to juggle multiple things. As a program manager for the Coast Guard running the Inshore Rescue Boat program, there was often, I know, half a dozen things on my desk at any given point that I would be able to figure out. And then something would fall through the cracks, and I'd have to rethink the whole thing. Now, I have trouble sometimes formulating sentences. And if I have to troubleshoot something, it takes me a lot longer to figure that out, something at home that needs to be fixed or whatever.

Shawn Buckley

Yeah, and I didn't mean to cut you off. I want you to expand on that a little more. So I want people to understand. You're talking about this period in the summer of 2022, you were a program manager for the Coast Guard at that time. So you had some pretty heavy responsibilities, and you had to be keeping track of a lot of things.

Paul Hollyoak

That's correct.

Shawn Buckley

Yeah, so by the time September 2022 came around, you actually were no longer able to do your job as program manager because of the cognitive difficulties. Is that right?

Paul Hollyoak

That is correct, yeah. I was handing a lot of my responsibilities off to a subordinate that was taking care of things. And I even took the last two weeks of September off on leave, hoping that I would be able to have a break from work and regain some of that stuff. Whether you know, I thought maybe it was stress at work that was causing it or whatever. But after a couple weeks of leave in September, it was obvious that this isn't what was going to be solving the issue.

Shawn Buckley

Right. So my understanding is you then in the fall of 2022 went on sick leave. Basically, you had a whole bunch of sick time booked because you had just never been off sick before.

Paul Hollyoak

That's correct, yeah. Yeah. I had maybe six months off prior for an injury to my hand, but other than that I have not been sick. And so October 1st, I went on sick leave and that is going to carry me through until mid-June of this year.

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Shawn Buckley

Right. And then in May, June of this year, when your sick time runs out, you're going to be placed on long-term disability.

Paul Hollyoak

That is correct, through my health program or whatever it is. That will be 70 per cent salary starting in June.

Shawn Buckley

Right. Are you in any pain on a day-to-day basis?

Paul Hollyoak

It fluctuates from day to day. And my knees are probably the worst culprit. And also, the fact that I'm not getting out and about as much. I'm not exactly bedridden; I have been at times. But, you know, you lose some of the ability to get into a comfortable spot, and so other things start to hurt. Like if I'm leaning on my elbows more because my hands are hurting or whatever, the position that I'm in, then my elbows start hurting. And so it can be a general achy feeling in my whole body. Other days it might be just my knees that are causing the issues.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you had told us earlier that you had had some real difficulties with your hands. How are your hands now?

Paul Hollyoak

My hands still present a fair bit of problem. A rheumatologist put me on hydroxychloroquine to bring down the inflammation, and that's held to a large degree. Making a fist and applying any pressure to anything causes pain. It almost feels like my fingers are too fat, and it's the only way I can kind of explain it. But yeah, I've not been able to play guitar or do anything that requires significant strength in my hands, probably for eight months anyway.

Shawn Buckley

Right, and my understanding is that you're also now on oxygen two or three hours a day.

Paul Hollyoak

That is correct. A doctor that I'm seeing actually wanted me to attend a hyperbaric chamber on a regular basis.

Shawn Buckley

Now, I don't know if you're still there because your screen froze, so we'll just wait a second to see if it unfreezes. And Paul, you're still frozen. So if you can still hear me, we'll cut off and go into a live witness. And if you can still hear me, I can tell you we were getting close to, oh there, you're back. I don't know if you could hear me during that time. It's funny how Zoom will freeze sometimes. And now you're frozen again. If it comes back, I—

Paul Hollyoak

Yeah, my apologies.

Shawn Buckley

There you go. Yeah, so what I was hoping to, and I was getting close to the end of my questions.

But you'd spoken about having breathing problems and you're on oxygen on a daily basis, and I'm just wondering if you can share with us a little more detail about the breathing problems and why you're on oxygen.

Paul Hollyoak

It's related not only to the breathing problems, but it's oxygen perfusion as well. So the breathing, the pulmonologist is calling a form of pneumonia, which is related to the inflammation kind of generally happening in my body. So it's inflammation in the lungs that is causing that and makes it difficult at times to do anything for a period of time because of the fact that I get short of breath. The other part is that we're trying to increase the oxygen

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in my blood cells. My hemoglobin count is down, and so we're trying to monopolize on the ability to get oxygen throughout my body—and breathing concentrated oxygen allows that to happen more effectively.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, Paul those are the questions I had. I'll ask the commissioners if they have any questions, and they do.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you very much, Mr. Hollyoak, for your testimony. I was wondering whether the side effect from your vax has been properly reported to the Health Authority.

Paul Hollyoak

No. Basically because the specialists that I've been seeing are reluctant to use those words. The closest they get is calling it a significant multi-systemic disease. Even though I've used the words vaccine, they've been reluctant to do the same.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you. Those are the questions. Paul, on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry, I sincerely thank you for attending and sharing with us today your story.

Paul Hollyoak

Thank you for the opportunity to share.

[00:17:47]

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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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