



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Vancouver, BC

Day 3

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EVIDENCE

Witness 12: Shaun Muldoon

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[00:00:00]

Shawn Buckley

So we'll move on to a different witness, Shaun Muldoon. Shaun, can you state your full name for the record, spelling your first and last name?

Shaun Muldoon

Shaun Muldoon, S-H-A-U-N M-U-L-L-D-O-O-N.

Shawn Buckley

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

Shaun Muldoon

I do.

Shawn Buckley

Now, by profession, you are a quality manager, and I think you are the only witness we've had here today that's born and raised in Langley.

Shaun Muldoon

That's correct.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. Now, you're here to speak about a vaccine injury, but I wanted to ask you first why you chose to get vaccinated.

Shaun Muldoon

I chose to get vaccinated. It wasn't out of fear of COVID per se. At the time, all the social activities had all been closed. My parents, being elderly, were very concerned about COVID. I wanted to make sure that I wasn't going to spread COVID to them, and I also just kind of wanted normal life back so we could start having events and activities. Sporting events were cancelled. You couldn't go to the movies. You couldn't have parties over. And I just wanted normal life back, and I also wanted to do it to protect my parents as well.

Shawn Buckley

Right. And so, you got your first dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine. Can you share with us what happened?

Shaun Muldoon

April 22nd, 2021, relatively, I guess, early in the vaccine rollout, I went and got AstraZeneca. It was the only vaccine available to me at the time. I actually didn't know anything about the vaccines. I hadn't done any research. I didn't even know the name of the vaccine that I'd gotten. I knew there was Pfizer and a couple other ones. I really didn't care which one I got. I wasn't concerned about it. I had no hesitation. I wasn't worried about them whatsoever.

About, I guess, a week later, I hadn't had any ill effects whatsoever, but I went to bed on a Sunday night feeling absolutely fine. I woke up in the middle of the night with some stomach pain and it persisted throughout the night. It was quite intense. In the morning, I threw up a couple times and I called in sick to work. And I don't throw up. I'm a very bad thrower-upper, as my wife says. It sounds like I'm screaming at the toilet and so it's very uncommon for me to throw up.

So I decided to call the doctor and just talk to him, and he basically said, "Well, you don't have any COVID symptoms. It's probably just a stomach bug. Maybe call 8-1-1 just to make sure." And he said, "We'll kind of worry about it if it doesn't improve over the next few days." 8-1-1 wasn't concerned about it at all: I had no COVID symptoms. They said just carry on.

A couple days later, I did have a fever, so I went for COVID tests. It came back negative. And then on Friday, it had been a long week: I'd barely eaten. I'd been in a lot of pain. I hadn't been vomiting throughout the week. On Friday, I called my doctor and said, "I'm not getting better. I'm still in a lot of pain." And he said, "well, give it a couple more days," and I did mention, I said I was vaccinated.

Shawn Buckley

So when you call your doctor on Friday, I mean, you've been sick since Monday.

Shaun Muldoon

Since Monday. So I spoke to him on Monday morning and again on Friday. And he said on Friday that if my condition didn't improve that, you know, "give it a couple more days," and then we'd investigate it further. I did mention that being vaccinated, a couple weeks earlier at this point, and he said, "Oh, it's very unlikely that it could be from that; there is no concern in that regard." Then that night, I deteriorated very rapidly. The pain went from tolerable to just excruciating. In the morning, I started throwing up and passing blood.

Shawn Buckley

And then you went to the hospital.

Shaun Muldoon

Yeah, um, sorry.

Shawn Buckley

No, take your time.

Shaun Muldoon

Yeah, when I started passing blood, at that point, I immediately called my wife and said, “I need to go to hospital; something is wrong.” And so she was out; she ran home and grabbed me.

We live five minutes from Langley Memorial, so we got to emergency and I kind of charged past the security man that was there who was asking me if I had any COVID symptoms. I actually said, “Yes, but I tested negative. Where’s your bathroom?” And he sent me to the corner of the emergency ward there, and I went to the bathroom and just started— nah, I’m sorry. I’ve told this story a hundred times. I don’t normally get too upset. But I just started vomiting profusely in the bathroom. Just between, like, the pain and the exhaustion, just in a ball on the floor, I couldn’t get up.

[00:05:00]

I actually texted my wife from the floor, and said, “I don’t think I can come out.” She just replied and said she was checking me in. And after about five minutes or so, I did kind of pull myself together—which I’m going to try to do here today as well—and I made my way out to emergency where she was checking me in at that point.

They got me into the room pretty quickly. There was kind of like a dentist chair in the room. I don’t know if that makes any sense, but that was the room I ended up in, in emergency. I couldn’t even sit in the chair. I was still on the floor; I kept having nurses tell me I had to get off the floor. And I’d try; I’d sit back in the chair. But the pain was just like nothing I’d ever experienced. I actually don’t remember much from the rest of the day. I think I was just kind of oblivious to what was going on around me. I don’t remember the doctors. I don’t remember the nurses. I was sent for quite a few tests. I don’t even recall what tests I was sent for, if it was CTs or MRIs.

The next kind of vivid memory I have was heading down a hall and through a set of doors into an incredibly bright room and asking the nurse, I said, “Am I going for surgery?” And she said, “Yes.” I said, “So this isn’t a stomach bug?” And she kind of laughed and she said, “No, this isn’t a stomach bug.” And I just kind of asked, “What time is it?” I’d gotten to the hospital around 11:30 or noon that afternoon, and the one doctor—it turned out was my surgeon—said, “It’s just after three.” And I said, “Oh, like in the afternoon?” And he said, “No, it’s just after 3 a.m.” And at that point I became very scared because I was trying to figure out why I was getting ran down a hallway and into a surgery at three in the morning. But then they just, they knocked me out, and, you know, the room goes black. And then the next day I woke up in the ICU.

Shawn Buckley

And did they explain to you the next day what had happened?

Shaun Muldoon

Yeah, the surgeon came to visit me, and I woke up and I was full of tubes, as you do. And I had these two compression leggings on that would inflate and go back and forth, and I had a heart rate monitor on. And the surgeon came to visit me and kind of exposed— I had a big, huge spacer in my stomach, and he explained that I had a blood clot in my portal vein and that I'd lost about six feet of my small intestine.

Shawn Buckley

So can you explain to us what vein that is?

Shaun Muldoon

Not specifically, not having a medical degree. But the portal vein, it feeds blood to your internal organs, and so it had cut off blood supply to my intestines, the clot that was there.

Shawn Buckley

Right, so your intestine actually had died, a portion of it had died.

Shaun Muldoon

Yeah, I had lost just over two metres of my small intestine; I lost what's called your ileum. And the surgeon explained, basically, that the reason that I was still open and they hadn't stitched me up is because they'd taken as much intestine as they could for me to ever, kind of, have hope to have a normal life again. It wasn't recoverable: the intestine was gone. But they left some intestine in place that was very unhealthy, hoping it would recover because at this point, he wanted to make sure I retained every inch that I could.

A couple days later, they did a second surgery and about 10 centimetres of intestine had died. So they removed that, but the rest was recovering. So at that point, they gave me a stoma, so I had an ostomy bag, and they closed me up. So that was, I think, maybe day three in the ICU, or day four.

They didn't know what had caused my blood clot. I didn't have any of the traditional markers for blood clotting. But on the next day, they told me that they had found blood clots in both my lungs, and then the day after that, they'd found blood clot in my spleen, my abdomen. And they said there were five that they were watching quite carefully and they were very concerned about.

Shawn Buckley

And I just want to back up. My understanding is they did a CT scan of you. So when they're telling you, you have blood clots and where, I mean, you actually have these blood clots you're describing.

Shaun Muldoon

Oh, absolutely. I'd had many CTs. I make jokes that I should glow in the dark. I had two in one day, which, apparently, you're not supposed to have, and it was actually initially refused, but the surgeon said I had to go for it. This was before they knew what was happening.

My surgery was exploratory surgery, which I've been told doesn't happen anymore. It was an emergency exploratory surgery. The ER doctor had called the surgeon at one in the morning and said, "put a team together and come to Langley." And I guess the surgeon had initially asked if they could do it the next day and was told, "No, we can't wait till tomorrow." Because of that scenario, even being an emergency surgery and exploratory surgery, they didn't know what they'd find.

When I asked the surgeon, I said, "Am I going to live through this?" He hesitated long enough to make me very uncomfortable. And he just said that when they first opened me up and found all my intestines were dead that they didn't know if I was going to survive the surgery or not.

Shawn Buckley

So what happened next?

[00:10:00]

Shaun Muldoon

About day four, I guess, in the ICU, what was happening to me, they still didn't really know. They knew I was filling with blood clots. I'd been given an IVIG treatment, which is kind of supposed to shut down your immune system because I was clearly causing more clotting. And they'd also sent my blood work off, kind of all across North America and Canada for various tests. I think it was day four, I had a group of doctors, maybe half a dozen or a dozen doctors and specialists, they set up a table beside my bed in the ICU. And one of them came up and said, "We've concluded the investigation. It was done by McMaster University out in Ontario"—that's like a leading vaccine research centre in Canada—and he said, "This was caused by your vaccination."

Shawn Buckley

Okay, so they conclusively came back at that point and said it was caused by your vaccination.

Shaun Muldoon

Yes, I'm diagnosed with vaccine-induced immune thrombocytopenia, they call it VITT. And basically, when my body started to produce antibodies to fight the vaccine—the antibodies it produces are called platelet factor 4 antibodies or PF4 antibodies—and they activate your platelets, and your platelets clot. That's what they're supposed to do. But this is severe, aggressive clotting, and it actually kills you very, very, quickly if it's not treated.

Shawn Buckley

Right, and now my understanding is you had some particularly bad experiences in the hospital, and one involved your colostomy bag kept falling off. Can you share with us that event and then also mentally how you were doing?

Shaun Muldoon

Yeah, the time in the ICU, obviously it was in the peak of COVID when there was no visitors. They were quite good about letting my wife visit me just because at that point, I was kind of on, you know, deathwatch to some degree. I've never seen doctors that just looked so confused and concerned and scared. Because my surgery wasn't planned, normally when you have a stoma in an ostomy bag, they kind of plot it, where they want to have it. They get you to move and bend and make sure it's in a convenient spot. Well, we didn't have that opportunity. And so, my ostomy is right beside my belly button.

Unfortunately, I've got kind of a roll of chub right there. And so an ostomy bag is like a big band-aid, they just stick it to you. But every time I bent over or moved, it would crease it and then my output would leak out of the ostomy bag. Because my intestine was so short, I had a very high-output ostomy. It needed emptying like 10, 12 times a day. And so once it starts to leak the fluid—and like, it's not vomit, it's not diarrhea either; it's kind of somewhere in between the two—it leaks out and then the absorbent lets go. And so, my ostomy bags would just fall off my body relentlessly.

And the one nurse, she was really good. And she came up the third time it had broke open that day and I was soaked again. And they changed my bed and my clothes. And she said, "Is it me?" And I'm like, "No, you're one of the good ones." Like she was very confident, she knew what she was doing. And she patched me up and 15 minutes later, it fell off again. I'd just gone to bed and I was soaked again. So I had two nurses, they kind of stripped me naked and they got me cleaned up again. And I had one of these moments. I've had a lot of these moments.

It's finally after, I'd say, I spent three weeks in the ICU. I got moved to Surrey Memorial because that's where my hematology team was. And I'd say week four or five, they finally found a product that worked for my stoma. And I ended up using that product for the duration of the time that I had my stoma for—before my reversal was done to get reconnected.

So yeah, getting the colostomy bag or an ostomy bag was an absolute nightmare. I've been soaked in ostomy fluid more times than I care to admit. After I was discharged from hospital, it still happened repeatedly because we still hadn't found the ideal product yet. So I mean, losing the intestine and getting the ostomy bag, it was, like I said, it was a pretty upsetting aspect of this.

But what was actually the scarier aspect was the fact that they couldn't figure out why my blood was clotting, and they didn't know how to treat me. And I had a doctor who approached me—had many doctors that just came to visit me out of curiosity—and he said, "We know very little about the adverse events from these vaccines and we know even less about treating them." And he told me that he thought they had jumped the gun to some degree with these vaccines. When I asked my doctor, "How come we weren't warned about VITT? How come nobody had told me about the possibility of VITT?" The doctor said, "Well, we didn't know."

[00:15:00]

Shawn Buckley

And my understanding is you're going to be on blood thinners for the rest of your life?

Shaun Muldoon

At this point, yes. I'm still producing the PF4 antibodies, so I'm still a blood clot risk at this point. They wanted to reverse my ostomy sooner, but they were very reluctant to because they didn't want to take me off blood thinners even for two days to do the surgery. So at one point, they said it'll be three months and then it was six months. At the nine-month mark, I was hospitalized again. I'd gotten incredibly weak and malnourished and dehydrated. I've been told at this point I probably should have been on parental nutrition. I should have been on TPN [total parental nutrition], but they were hoping I could just eat my way healthy and I spent six months failing at doing that.

And so in January of last year, my health had deteriorated to a point that they said, "We can't wait any longer; we just need to reconnect what's left of you" — You know, I had no colon at this point, and there was a bit of ileum still attached to my colon, so when they reconnected that, I got a bit of my small intestine back as well.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. Now, can you speak about your mental health and how that was affected?

Shaun Muldoon

I stayed—well, I tried to stay—positive initially. Actually, I had a lot of nurses comment on that, that I seemed to be in pretty good point, and I said I just want to focus on recovery, that's all I can really do. I wasn't bitter or upset about what had happened. I just kind of thought I was an unfortunate one in the process until the vaccine passport got introduced because I wasn't considered vaccinated. I'd only had one. The doctor in internal medicine and my hematologist come and spoke to me and said, "No more jabs, no more pokes, at least not until you make a full recovery, then we can discuss it at that point." And then a couple months later, the passports came in, and so I asked for an exemption [Exhibit VA-8a]. And my hematologist called me back and said, "You're not eligible for an exemption from further vaccine."

Shawn Buckley

So a team of doctors has agreed that you were injured by a vaccine that has literally almost killed you and destroyed your life, but even in those circumstances, you were not eligible for a vaccine [exemption].

Now, we're running short on time, so I'm going to have to lead you a little bit. But my understanding is that the effect on your family life from this has just been tremendous: that for about a year and a half you were—just using your words when we had a conversation earlier—useless as a father and husband. That, basically, your wife kind of felt kicked to the curb because of all the attention that was having to be focused on you. And you're not sure how your marriage is going to do, going forward.

Shaun Muldoon

It was almost, like I had lost my intestines and I spent almost a year recovering, and I had a second surgery when they reconnected my intestine. I was incredibly weak, and it was a long, slow, recovery from there as well. I spent a lot of time incredibly weak, exhausted, fatigued, and I was, as a father and as a husband, pretty useless, to be honest. At one point, I felt like I was a third child for my wife to take care of.

We already had a lot going on, both the kids are in sports and coaching and everything else. It was incredibly difficult on my relationship, even just our family life. It was incredibly trying, and I feel like we're still recovering from just trying to fight our way through this.

I've never known true fatigue before when you can barely get out of bed. I had to deal with some depression as well because my body wasn't working very well. And then just the anger and the bitterness that the fact that the province didn't seem to want to help, the federal government wasn't going to help. I was medicated. I was very angry at the world for a period of time and so obviously, that contributes to a struggling relationship as well.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you for sharing that. I don't have any further questions and I'll ask if the commissioners have some questions of you. And there is a question.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you very much for sharing this incredibly sad, sad story. What's the prognostic for your health moving forward?

Shaun Muldoon

I have short bowel syndrome now, having lost a considerable amount of my digestive tract. So I have bowel issues, digestion issues, and absorption issues. So I kind of have my staples I have to stick to or else I have bowel issues. Even sticking to my staples, I still tend to have them. I'm on Vitamin B12 injections. I'm still on a blood thinner, and I'm on like a whole slew of supplements trying to ensure that I'm not malnourished. For some reason I still seem to struggle with dehydration issues as well. When I got my colon back that helped significantly.

My hematologist wants to just leave me on blood thinners for the time being. When I had COVID last year, I finally tested positive for COVID about a year later.

[00:20:00]

I called her and said, "Should I be concerned about blood clots because COVID can potentially cause blood clots?" And she says, "Well, no, you're on blood thinners at this point, I'm not concerned about that."

So I'd say even in the last few months I've noticed my energy levels have started to improve. I don't want to say I had brain fog, but my cognitive ability was just decimated. I was on 100 milligrams of prednisone a day, my whole body just trembled. I was told 70 is kind of the max, and I was on 100 for quite some time. And so I feel like I'm still going

through my recovery at this point, and so I'm not sure I'm going to make a 100 per cent recovery. I'd like to have my intestines back, but I think the last few months has been pretty positive.

Commissioner Massie

Do you know of other people that had similar vaccine injury?

Shaun Muldoon

Yeah, I know of a few. There's a woman in Squamish that also has VITT. And then I'm in a VITT support group with mostly people in the U.K. because they gave out AstraZeneca for the duration, so they have lots of cases of VITT. And then there's also some people from Australia in the group as well. And so, you know, it's a support group for people that are kind of going through the thrombosis and thrombocytopenia.

Commissioner Massie

Did any of these doctors come up with some sort of explanation why you were more affected than other people by this condition?

Shaun Muldoon

No, they don't know. I'm part of numerous studies trying to determine what causes some people to produce these antibodies and not others. At this point, there's no answers.

Commissioner Massie

Thank you very much.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you, Shaun. There being no further questions on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry, I sincerely thank you for coming and sharing your story with us.

Shaun Muldoon

No problem.

[00:22:09]

Final Review and Approval: Margaret Phillips, August 25, 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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