



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Toronto, ON

Day 1

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EVIDENCE

Witness 11: Remus Nasui

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[00:00:00]

Shawn Buckley

Remus, we're sorry that we're running a little behind today. But I ask if you could state your full name for the record and then spell your first and last name for the record.

Remus Nasui

Thank you for having me. My name is Remus Nasui. First name spelled R-E-M-U-S. Last name spelled N-A-S-U-I.

Shawn Buckley

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

Remus Nasui

I do.

Shawn Buckley

Now, my understanding is that you've been a paramedic since 2002.

Remus Buckley

That's correct, yes.

Shawn Buckley

But you were working for a district that, at the end of the day, did not require vaccination.

Remus Nasui

They did not force us. They gave us the option to test.

Shawn Buckley

Right, okay. So you haven't lost your job?

Remus Nasui

I did not, no.

Shawn Buckley

But you did come down with COVID and now you have natural immunity.

Remus Nasui

That's correct, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

But despite the fact that you didn't lose your job, there was a difference in how you were treated. And I'm wondering if you can share with this Inquiry the difference in how you were treated.

Remus Nasui

Of course, yes. We were given the opportunity to continue employment, as long as— Initially, during the second wave, the Delta wave, after the vaccines were rolled out and vaccine mandates became more and more prevalent, we were given the option to do a RAT [rapid antigen] test once a week. And we had to submit that prior to coming to work to be allowed to fulfill our shifts.

After the Omicron wave came, we were required to do a test prior to every shift. And these tests only applied to unvaccinated paramedics. Despite knowing that people who took the vaccines could still get infected and transmit the disease to others.

Shawn Buckley

Now, did you find there was a difference? You're at work, you're in your paramedic's uniform, and you were able to basically, I assume, go wherever you want.

Remus Nasui

That's correct. During work, I was able to attend any venue or I could get on a plane or a train. I could go into an arena, a restaurant, a gym, if I was required to provide care. Then as soon as I finished my shift and went home, I was basically treated like a leper. I was unable to enter any venue because I did not have a vaccine pass.

Shawn Buckley

So you kind of experienced two worlds whenever you are on shift as a paramedic.

Remus Nasui

That's correct, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Can you give us some examples of how it affected you, not having a vax pass?

Remus Nasui

Well, it prevented me from travelling abroad to visit my father when he got sick. My family got kicked out of the recreation centre that we attended for about two years prior because we were not vaccinated.

Shawn Buckley

I'll just flesh that out a bit. So your father was sick. Am I correct that you're an only child?

Remus Nasui

That's correct. I am the only child, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

And it was somewhat serious. It was a blood clot and he—

Remus Nasui

That's right.

Shawn Buckley

So how did that affect you not being able to go and care for your father?

Remus Nasui

It was tough.

Shawn Buckley

And then you spoke about this club. You're not allowed to go. Are other family members that are not vaccinated allowed to go to this club?

Remus Nasui

My son was under 12 years old at the time and he was part of the tennis team—the elite tennis club there. So while me, my wife, and my daughter were kicked out, my son was allowed to continue attending the club.

Shawn Buckley

Same household.

Remus Nasui

Absolutely.

Shawn Buckley

So one member of your household could go and attend.

Remus Nasui

That's right, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

And then come home.

Remus Nasui

Yep.

Shawn Buckley

But no one else from the household could attend.

Remus Nasui

That's correct, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Now, did the culture change at work? After the vaccines and before the vaccines?

Remus Nasui

Yeah, I would say it changed dramatically after the mandate rollout took place. The mandates and the vax pass really created a lot of division in the company. The majority of employees took the vaccines. I think it was either following the vax pass or an interview by our Prime Minister in Quebec, where he labelled the unvaccinated as racist,

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misogynistic, extremist, that the attitude changed significantly even within my company towards those who did not take the vaccines.

Shawn Buckley

But specifically, how did it change? When you went to work, how did your coworkers treat you differently?

Remus Nasui

Well, within my company specifically, there were co-workers that approached management to refuse working with unvaccinated colleagues. There were other co-workers that posted online things like, "I hope that the unvaccinated colleagues get sick with COVID and do not get quarantine pay." Which was our policy in our service at the time: we got 14 days off with quarantine pay. And just generally speaking, an animosity towards people who chose not to do the right thing.

Shawn Buckley

And how did this make you feel?

Remus Nasui

Awful.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you have some unique experience. You lived in a communist country.

Remus Nasui

I grew up in a communist country, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

And then following that, you moved to South Africa while there was still apartheid.

Remus Nasui

That's correct. I got there at the end of apartheid in 1991.

Shawn Buckley

And so having had those lived experiences, how did you feel about the vaccine passports coming out?

Remus Nasui

To give you an example, when I lived in South Africa at the end of apartheid, before the transition took place, black people who lived or worked for white households were bussed in at the beginning of the week. And they would spend the next two weeks in the household there—with their employer-master basically relationship. And then they were given two, three days every two weeks to go spend with their families back in their home. But while they lived on-site in the white household, they were allowed to go and pick up items if the household needed them in the stores, in the city. But in order to be allowed to do that without fear of arrest, they had to get a permit from their household owner that allowed them to leave the household and go into the city to purchase items. So they had to get basically a pass.

Now, seeing that experience and knowing that that's wrong because it's a discriminatory experience based on race—and we know it's not right to discriminate based on race, religion, political ideology, gender—I think it's really wrong to discriminate against people based on their medical choice. And it kind of reminded me of that. Because without a vax pass, here you were not allowed to enter a variety of places. In fact, you were really unwanted.

Shawn Buckley

Now in your job as a paramedic, my understanding is that after the vaccines were rolled out in—I guess that would be 2021—you noticed a change in both the number of calls and the type of calls. Is that fair to say?

Remus Nasui

Yeah, I would say that the change started in— Probably towards October, November of 2021. And then it accelerated in 2022.

Shawn Buckley

And what was the change?

Remus Nasui

I noticed a significant increase in calls for palpitations, chest pains, an increase in sudden— well, in cardiac arrests, first-time seizures. A lot more calls than I was previously used to.

Shawn Buckley

When you say first-time seizures, what do you mean?

Remus Nasui

I mean a person that's had a seizure for the first time in their life. Despite living 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 years of their life without any seizures prior. No seizures disorder.

Shawn Buckley

Is that uncommon?

Remus Nasui

In my experience, yes.

Shawn Buckley

And when you were talking about cardiac issues, can you kind of give us a feel for how much of an increase you experienced?

Remus Nasui

Well, prior to 2021, I would probably come across a cardiac arrest once a week to once a month.

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And during 2022, when the booster rolled out, it became almost a daily occurrence for a while.

Shawn Buckley

So you went from once a month or once a week to basically a daily occurrence.

Remus Nasui

That's correct. Some days more than one.

Shawn Buckley

What about your experience with people that have died? Did the death rate change in your experience? Because in your job you see deaths and you attend at death scenes.

Remus Nasui

Based on what I saw in 2022, I saw a lot of the cardiac arrests that occurred that I attended to did not respond to our normal treatments.

Shawn Buckley

Now, my understanding is that for the health authority that you work at, in the paramedics, there are roughly about 750 employees.

Remus Nasui

That's correct. Approximately—between 750 and 800, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

And of those roughly 400 are males.

Ramus Nasui

I'd say, yeah, that would be a fair estimate.

Shawn Buckley

Now, before the vaccines, can you share with me roughly how many of those came down with COVID and what the outcomes were?

Ramus Nasui

To my knowledge, during the first two waves, which was the original and Delta, approximately 70 paramedics caught COVID. As far as I know, they all recovered and they're all back to work.

Shawn Buckley

Now, what happened after the vaccines rolled out to those 750 paramedics?

Remus Nasui

Well, in our company there's one case that I do know of where a gentleman in his 40s, after his booster, developed myocarditis within about two days. Ended up in the hospital. That's one out of 400 in males.

Shawn Buckley

Are there any other irregularities that you became personally aware of?

Remus Nasui

There are, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, what percentage would have gotten COVID after the vaccinations?

Remus Nasui

During the Omicron wave, at least 70 per cent of the company got COVID. At some point, or other.

Shawn Buckley

Seventy per cent of 750 employees.

Remus Nasui

Yeah, that includes part-timers as well. Some people work full-time and then there's a group of part-timers as well. It's fairly significant too. They work in other services as well.

Shawn Buckley

Now, having experienced what you experienced, what would you suggest that we do differently if this ever happens again?

Remus Nasui

I would like to see bodily autonomy respected. I would like to see no discrimination based on personal choice. I would like the public health authorities to consider other opinions by other academics. Case in point being the Great Barrington Declaration, which was co-authored by a professor from Stanford, a former professor from Harvard, and a professor from Oxford, which took into account the high-risk groups and how to protect them while allowing society to continue their life. Without restrictions or mandates. I would also like to see Public Health Canada run the pandemic themselves, without World Health Organization recommendations, like one-size-fits-all. Because that's not right. And that's not science.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you. I have no further questions. I'll ask the commissioners if they have any questions. No questions.

Remus, on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry we thank you so much for coming today and testifying.

Remus Nasui

Thank you.

[00:14:48]

Final Review and Approval: Jodi Bruhn, August 16, 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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