



NATIONAL CITIZENS INQUIRY

Toronto, ON

Day 2

March 31, 2023

EVIDENCE

Witness 16: Ksenia Usenko

Full Day 2 Timestamp: 09:33:58–09:50:47

Source URL: <https://rumble.com/v2fm8wg-national-citizens-inquiry-toronto-day-1.html>

[00:00:00]

Shawn Buckley

Hello, Ksenia, how are you?

Ksenia Usenko

I'm good. How are you?

Shawn Buckley

I am well. Can I ask you to please state your full name for the record, spelling your first and last name for the record.

Ksenia Usenko

My name is Ksenia Usenko. First name is spelled K-S-E-N-I-A. Last name U-S-E-N-K-O.

Shawn Buckley

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

Ksenia Usenko

Yes, I do.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you have been basically, a nurse for 15 years.

Ksenia Usenko

Yes, yes. I've been a nurse for 15 years.

Shawn Buckley

And you worked on a rehabilitation unit?

Ksenia Usenko

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

Now, when we started introducing the vaccines, I think that was in January of 2021, did you see any changes in the rehabilitation unit?

Ksenia Usenko

Not right away. But a little bit later I started seeing some trends in patient population and their conditions. They were somewhat— If you look back on when they got their vaccines, it seemed that it was pretty recent for some of the patients.

Shawn Buckley

And what were some of the changes that you were seeing?

Ksenia Usenko

I have seen some families, actually one family who within, I believe it was three to four weeks after their second vaccination, both of them were septic. And I know it could be coincidental. The major one that I've noticed was thrombocytopenia, which is low platelet count on the majority of patients that have been vaccinated that I've seen.

Shawn Buckley

Right. So just so I understand. So when you say a lot of patients, how many patients would you—are we talking about?

Ksenia Usenko

So normally we would have four to five patients during the day shift and about six patients—six to seven depending how many staff members are present—in the evening. And at night it would be eight—

Shawn Buckley

Right. But I guess I'm trying to find out, when you're talking about a low platelet count, how many patients are we talking about?

Ksenia Usenko

Altogether?

Shawn Buckley

Yes.

Ksenia Usenko

I have not counted. But I think the majority of my patients that I had during that period, their platelets were low. And for people who had surgeries, could be related to that. But a lot of them were significantly lower than what I've normally seen.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. And when you say a low platelet count, that's a low white blood cell count?

Ksenia Usenko

Yes. That's responsible for coagulation, one of the cells.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you came across an unusual blood clot in a couple of patients. Can you tell us about that?

Ksenia Usenko

This was significant for me because I've never seen that before. Out of five patients that I had, two of them had blood clots. One person had a blood clot in her arm, the other person in his foot. And none of them had—normally you would see it, well, it's a rare appearance. Even in surgical patients. But both of those patients did not have any surgeries prior, so they were more medical patients.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. And were you aware of their vaccination status?

Ksenia Usenko

Both of them were recently vaccinated.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. And you had never seen that before.

Ksenia Usenko

No. The only time I've seen somebody getting the clots spontaneously—well, somewhat spontaneously—is a person who was a smoker and was on birth control at the same time. And I've only seen it once.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you made a decision about vaccination.

Ksenia Usenko

Mm-hmm.

Shawn Buckley

And what was that decision?

Ksenia Usenko

I wanted to wait and see. And then after seeing all of these health concerns, I decided not to get it.

Shawn Buckley

Now, were you treated differently at the hospital?

Ksenia Usenko

If I would bring up what I'm seeing with my eyes in the conversation, some of my colleagues would just leave the conversation. They didn't want to hear it.

Shawn Buckley

They'd literally leave the conversation.

Ksenia Usenko

Sometimes, yes.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. Did you have to do any different testing or were there any other requirements for you to continue working?

Ksenia Usenko

Yes, I had to do the antigen test once a week. And I can't remember exactly when I started, I want to say it was September 2021, until I was terminated.

[00:05:00]

Shawn Buckley

Okay. And that termination, when did that happen?

Ksenia Usenko

On November 3rd, 2021.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. Now before that, did you have to go through some mandatory education on vaccination?

Ksenia Usenko

We had an online sort of video with information to make an informed decision about vaccines for ourselves. And this was for all the healthcare professionals who were either not showing their status of vaccination or people who already showed their status. And I actually brought a picture of it. And on one of the slides, it stated that it's 100 per cent effective at preventing hospitalization and death from COVID-19.

Shawn Buckley

So just wait a second. I want that to sink in for people. So you're telling us this is the hospital requiring you to go through an education program.

Ksenia Usenko

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And the object is to help you make a decision on whether or not you want to get vaccinated.

Ksenia Usenko

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And one of the slides—and you brought a picture—says that the vaccine is 100 per cent protective, basically preventing death and hospitalization.

Ksenia Usenko

Yes. That's what it states.

Shawn Buckley

And you can leave that with us, so that we can enter it as part of the record today?

Ksenia Usenko

Sure [Exhibit TO-25].

Shawn Buckley

Okay, thank you. And I'm sorry to interrupt you, but I just found that so important. Did you also have to sign something when you were taking that course?

Ksenia Usenko

At the end of it, I had to sign—it's kind of like a declaration of your vaccine status. So to show that even though you got the information, maybe you changed your mind to go and get the vaccine. Or if you didn't change your mind, you just declared that you, at this point, still declined it.

Shawn Buckley

Now, did the hospital also communicate to you by way of email concerning whether or not you should be vaccinated?

Ksenia Usenko

There was multiple emails. And I'm not sure if it went to everybody who worked in the hospital or just targeting the people who have not specified their status. But I received multiple emails from the director of occupational health in the hospital, asking to show them what your status is. I just didn't reply.

Shawn Buckley

Now, you've already told us you were terminated. But can you tell us basically how that came about? How did they go about doing this?

Ksenia Usenko

Well, there was emails stating that if you don't declare your status or if you decline the vaccine or unless you have an exemption, you would have to—you would be terminated. So there's been multiple emails warning you about it. And I just couldn't believe that it's actually possible, that they actually are going to go this far to do it. In my heart, I just thought it can't be possible. Number one, we don't know enough about this product. What I'm seeing— From what I observed, there's clearly problems. I also couldn't believe that, knowing what biomedical ethics state about informed consent, this would be a decision-maker for your employment. And to this day, it still haunts me that they actually went ahead and did it.

Shawn Buckley

Now when they terminated you, what were the reasons that they gave for your termination?

Ksenia Usenko

The reasons for termination was— There was three. But the one that really kind of put into perspective of who I was as a nurse, the word, "disobedience."

Shawn Buckley

I'm sorry?

Ksenia Usenko

The word "disobedience." That's stated on my termination letter.

Shawn Buckley

Right. Did they also indicate something about whether or not it was professional misconduct?

Ksenia Usenko

Yes, they put that there as well.

Shawn Buckley

Okay, so I just want to understand. Here you had worked actually for that employer for 14 years, am I correct?

Ksenia Usenko

Yes.

Shawn Buckley

And the only issue is you chose not to take a vaccine.

Ksenia Usenko

Correct.

Shawn Buckley

And on your termination letter, they called you disobedient.

Ksenia Usenko

Correct.

Shawn Buckley

And they stated explicitly that you were guilty of professional misconduct.

Ksenia Usenko

Yeah. That's correct.

[00:10:00]

Shawn Buckley

So whether or not you take a medical treatment is now an issue of professional misconduct for nurses?

Ksenia Usenko

It appears so, yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Okay. How did this make you feel? And I'm sorry that—

Ksenia Usenko

I feel—and I stated that on my termination meeting—I feel dehumanized.

You know, I immigrated to Canada for a better life. And I wanted to help people and I still do, with all my heart. And to have somebody tell me that I'm just disobedient because I refuse something that is still under research? At the time, when I received this education, I actually had a patient who had two vaccines, went to ICU for COVID-19, and was recovering after being at ICU and had multitude of different problems in his health. He would probably never be the same. And he was fully vaccinated.

So to state that it's 100 per cent effective, I just couldn't believe it. I saw it with my eyes that it's not true.

Shawn Buckley

Now you were telling us about some changes that happened after vaccination. Would it be fair to say that you were having concerns that there were adverse reactions occurring, that were showing up at the hospital?

Ksenia Usenko

In my opinion, yes.

Shawn Buckley

And did the hospital know how to report adverse vaccine effects?

Ksenia Usenko

Well, I made sure that on that floor, we had those forms. At the time, I was a safety rep. But during my meeting of termination, I asked them how come there was no education on those forms: the Adverse Event Following Immunization Forms. And I had to repeat that question three times. Because the panel that was terminating me, they didn't know what I was talking about.

Shawn Buckley

They weren't even aware that there was a form to report adverse vaccine effects.

Ksenia Usenko

Correct.

Shawn Buckley

And who was on that panel, like, what were their qualifications or positions?

Ksenia Usenko

One person was human resources; the second person was my manager, who was an occupational therapist; and the third person was a union representative.

Shawn Buckley

Now, having had this experience—so seeing things at the hospital and having to go through this course and be getting emails and being treated differently and then being fired—what was the effect on you of these actions?

Ksenia Usenko

It's still affecting me, as you can see. It breaks my heart that it's possible in—in any country. It affected my relationships, even with some family members.

It's just sad. It's heartbreaking to know that this is possible in such a developed country, and for a product that we still don't know enough about.

Shawn Buckley

If this ever happened again, what do you think we should do differently?

Ksenia Usenko

I think we should do what we did with the flu. We opened extra units. We had extra staff, and we, you know, tested people and made sure that they got the help they needed with all the resources that are available. And I don't— Maybe take more precautions around more vulnerable people who are susceptible to this particular illness.

[00:15:00]

I don't know. There's many things that could have been prevented. And hearing all the people speaking here today and I've been watching the ones you did in the Maritimes. And, you know, all this harm and suffering would have been avoided. Well, maybe not all, but at least some. So yeah.

Shawn Buckley

Well, Ksenia, I don't have any further questions for you. I'll ask if the commissioners do. And they do.

Commissioner Drysdale

I just wanted a little clarification on a point. When you said they terminated you and they put on your termination notice, professional misconduct was one of the items?

Ksenia Usenko

Yeah.

Commissioner Drysdale

Did the nursing association not approach you and ask you anything about that?

Ksenia Usenko

Not yet.

Commissioner Drysdale

Sorry?

Ksenia Usenko

Not yet.

Commissioner Drysdale

Do you expect them to?

Ksenia Usenko

We'll see. Time will show.

Commissioner Drysdale

Thank you.

Shawn Buckley

Thank you, Ksenia. We don't have any further questions. But on behalf of the National Citizens Inquiry, I'd like to sincerely thank you for coming to testify. And if you can leave me that document you have where you basically have a photo of them claiming that the vaccine was 100 per cent effective in preventing deaths and hospitalizations, we'd like to make that part of our record.

Ksenia Usenko

Yep. Thank you. And thank you all for doing what you're doing.

[00:16:49]

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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