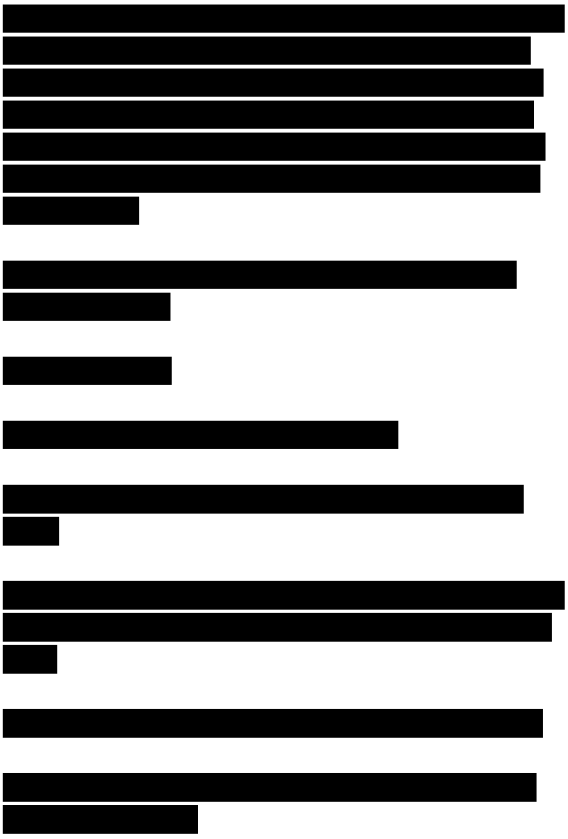
INQUIRY RESPECTING THE TREATMENT, EXPERIENCES AND OUTCOMES OF INNU IN THE CHILD PROTECTION SYSTEM

English Transcript | Volume 19

Commissioners: Retired Judge James Igloliorte, Dr. Mike Devine and Anastasia Qupee

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Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good evening, folks.

We're starting the afternoon session now, and we invite Mr. Matthew Andrew.

Hi, Mr. Andrew, you can use your language of preference and, of course, Anne will be translating. So, remember that. Try not to go too long before she has to translate either in English or Innu-aimun.

INTERPRETER NUNA: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA (providing English translation): I want to thank everyone that I am here, and I would like to acknowledge my granddaughter who is sitting next to me. Her name is Victoria McKay. She was taken away, from CSSD. She was placed in Goose Bay and CSSD did not inform us where she had been placed. CSSD did not want to tell us where they – where she was placed. We wanted to find out. We were looking for her in Goose Bay, trying to find out where they had placed her. And two days after we looked and we knew – we heard that she was taken to Ontario.

When she stayed with us at our home, she was not sick, nor did she not have any behavioural problems. She followed our rules and it was the CSSD who took her. We never heard from what had happened in Ontario with my granddaughter here. No one told us.

While in placement in Ontario, my granddaughter was given medication for depression. She stayed in Ontario the – over one year. While in Ontario, she was allowed to visit us one Christmas. When she came for her visit, that's when we felt something had happened. Something changed within her. She told us that she used to hide the medication that was supposed to be given to her.

We also noticed that being different was her – she was different in – mentally. Like I said before, we were not told about the medication that what she was given, and we knew something was wrong with her, either it was the side effects of the medication that she was given.

And today, as she sits here with me by my side, she still takes medication every three months. I think that it was an order made by CSSD.

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

V. MCKAY: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: We also noticed that when she wasn't taking her medication, she was doing well. She didn't show us that there was any mental health within her.

One night, in the wintertime, I remember she took a shower. Then that's when we knew something was wrong with her. When she took a shower, she went on through –

she went out through a window without any clothing and when our neighbour saw what had happened, then she called CSSD on her.

Then RCMP came and an ambulance. They took her to the hospital. She stayed at the hospital two or three days, then they took her to St. John's to further assess her. Her mother, Vanessa Andrew, went with her. That's Vanessa's daughter.

And that's when they knew that she had a mental health problem and that's why she was given the injection for it for every three months. She will take the injection as long as she lives. This is what CSSD has done to my granddaughter.

Also I will mention this, that my granddaughter cannot bear a child because of the injection, I guess it was the side effect of it. So my family, we went to St. John's to try to take the doctor and the CSSD involved to court. It took us many years to go where we want to go, with this problem that I have, that I see what CSSD has done. And we have no resources to look into, and this is why I come here today to tell my story.

Also that – I'd like to also mention that the injection makes her gain weight. The doctor told us that this would happen because of the injection.

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

V. MCKAY: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: We went to Waterford. Her mother went to Waterford with her and they decreased the medication that she was receiving. And while her dad was speaking there, she said: If she doesn't take the injection, then her mental health is not good.

V. MCKAY: It's not stable.

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: When we were at Waterford we met her doctor, and her doctor told us that this was CSSD told us to do, to give her the injection and the doctor said – told them that the injection, she's taking it too often.

When we were there, CSSD and her doctor were together. They had their meeting regarding my granddaughter's injection to be decreased. That's all we wanted to hear. We wanted to be in the room with them while they were talking about my granddaughter, but CSSD did not allow us to be present at their meeting.

Also, today, her medication was sent to Goose Bay. That's where she's taking her injections, so her next injection will be sometime in November.

And that is my story and this is how my family has gone through, and we are still thinking of taking CSSD to court. We requested her papers from the Ontario CSSD for my granddaughter. We also noticed her papers, some of them were erased – some of the wording was erased.

Thank you for listening to my story and maybe my granddaughter has something to say, too, after I speak. And I really want to go ahead and take the CSSD to court.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much, Sir.

And if you'd like to add anything else?

V. MCKAY: Everything he said was –

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: You're good?

V. MCKAY: – it covered it all.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

V. MCKAY: Yeah.

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: I forgot to mention, too, that my wife could not be here with me today but she is willing to tell her own story about CSSD, regarding that I just lost my son about a month or so ago, through suicide, and he was also experiencing the – taken away from his family and also his grandson.

That's – my wife is willing to tell that story. Maybe next week, he said.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: And – yes and we are willing to hear her. We'll be very happy to hear her if she wanted to.

Thank you for coming in, and also thank you to your granddaughter for being here, as well.

During the times when she was experiencing trouble and she was apprehended by CSSD, did you receive any information from CSSD with the help of an interpreter?

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: No.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Would you have preferred, if you had a chance, to have had an interpreter explain what was being said?

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: Yes, I would have liked it if a translator was there.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: At the time you started the process of a hearing in St. John's, did you have a lawyer?

M. ANDREW: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER NUNA: No, we did not have a lawyer, but we did feel that something was hid from us, my family.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Do you have any questions, (inaudible)?

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: First of all, thank you for coming here today, the both of you, and I want to extend my condolences on your recent loss.

Just a couple of questions – brief questions. One is, how old was your daughter when she was taken into care?

[Dialogue between M. Andrew and V. McKay in Sheshatshiu-aimun.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Granddaughter, I'm sorry, Victoria.

V. MCKAY: Eleven.

M. ANDREW: Eleven.

INTERPRETER NUNA: Eleven years old.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: And how old are you now, Victoria?

V. MCKAY: Twenty.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Twenty years.

Okay, thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken] – Victoria, for coming with your grandfather.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

[Dialogue between Commissioner Qupee and M. Andrew in Sheshatshiu-aimun.]

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: Tshenashkumitin.

M. ANDREW: Thank you.

[redacted]