



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

English Transcript

Volume 50

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

Thursday

10 April 2025

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good morning, everybody. We're going to be doing some housekeeping items, and then Commissioner Qupee will have some words to say. After that, we'll see how things are going for our connections to St. John's.

But I'll ask you to stand as Penote's going to offer our prayer for the day.

ELDER ANTUAN: First of all, I'd like to say to everybody good morning. And thank you for taking time for us to do what you have to do, and I will ask you to very welcome in our community.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Elder Penote Antuan, we're very grateful that you're so involved in the Inquiry, and you're so much involved in considering not only Innu health, but also the health of the Inquiry team, everyone here.

Thank you again. Tshinashkumitin.

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: I had a marker. Right here

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

[Audio for panel members on video cuts in.]

C. URQUHART: Sorry, could we ask you to mute your mics. That's for Michelle Shallow and Wanda Lundrigan, please.

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

Do it in English?

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

So I was just explaining in my language, and some of the – an outline of what we have planned for – in the coming months.

So for this week, as you know, that we're doing the formal hearings, and in July, for two weeks, we're gonna be in Natuashish. I'm gonna go over the *Gathering Voices*, the Mushuau Innu history, and then we have the death investigations that will be also starting. We have six families that are involved in the death investigations, and so in the coming months, that's what our job will be, to prepare for those and have the hearings for those.

That will continue on until July, and then September we'll have the – we'll have Ben Andrew. He'll be doing the Innu history. And then in September, the end of September, we'll have another death investigation. In November and December – no, in November we'll have another investigation, and December we'll have a formal hearing. So that's kind of, like, a gist of what's coming in the coming months for both communities.

So, again, thank you and I hope that this helps. And if you have any questions, you can reach out to us at our office.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much, Commissioner Qupee.

It's important that we let everyone know that we're working diligently, and simply because we don't have the community visits, doesn't mean that the Inquiry is not progressing. There's lots of work that our lawyers are doing with counsel for the families, as well as reaching out to our researchers and investigators.

Ms. Urquhart, you're satisfied that we continue where we left off yesterday?

C. URQUHART: Yes, Mr. Brookwell has an hour left on the clock, and then we'll move over to counsel for the witnesses.

Thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I want to welcome everyone back. We have people on the screen from outside the community, and everyone in here as well, thank you for your attendance again as we continue with the Innu Representative Organizations counsel, Brookwell, is going to start again this morning.

Nympha Byrne, the interpreter, asked the Commissioners how she should signal when the English questioning or the English answers are too long or complicated. We're telling her that she's the boss, Lisa is the boss, and if they want to hold up their hand or interrupt a speaker, they are quite free to do so to make sure that we get the proper interpretation.

B. BROOKWELL: Good morning.

I'd like to pick up on a piece that we ended with yesterday, to ask you a question about the PRIDE program.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Good morning.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

B. BROOKWELL: So I understand the program is only available in English. Is that your understanding?

M. SHALLOW: Hi, it's Michelle. Yes.

But I will say, I've been gone for six years, so I don't know if there have been other changes, including the language change, since I've been gone.

B. BROOKWELL: Ms. Barnes, from your time which followed Ms. Shallow, do you know of any changes to the language available for the PRIDE program, or if it's just English, to your knowledge?

J. BARNES: No, to my knowledge, there's been no change there. So the PRIDE materials themselves would be provided in English.

B. BROOKWELL: I'd like to ask a couple of questions now about the 2012 MOU, and if you don't know the answer to this, then that's fine. I don't want anyone to have to guess. To your knowledge, was the MOU written solely by the province or was it language negotiated with Indigenous groups, like the 2015 Working Relationship Agreement?

M. SHALLOW: Hi, it's Michelle. I don't know.

B. BROOKWELL: And that's fine. Thank you.

Do you know if there were any agreements like the MOU between the province and the Innu about child welfare before 2012?

INTERPRETER BYRNE: We just said that. We just read this one. Do we have to repeat it again? We can.

INTERPRETER RICH: We can do it again.

B. BROOKWELL: Yes; yeah, no, that's okay. I know I've written it on there, so you may have gone ahead. But, please, let's do it one more time for the translation.

W. LUNDRIGAN: I should speak to this.

Okay, hi, it's Wanda.

So I should speak to this because I was intimately involved with the 2012 agreement. But before – I can only speak to before that. It would have been – if there was any agreements, it would have been with a – the regional health authority because there was no line department for Child, Youth and Family Services.

So it wouldn't have even been probably done at the provincial office where Michelle

worked because everything was devolved to the five regional health authorities. So I would say any of us could speak to that.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Can I ask – can you repeat that again about regional health? And I didn't get what you said about the CYFS, what was that?

W. LUNDRIGAN: Okay.

So prior to 2009, the responsibility for child – the delivery of child welfare services was the responsibility of the regional health authorities. So people who worked for the province might not have that knowledge. That would have been under the direction or the responsibility of a regional health authority because child welfare was not being administered provincially through a line department.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay, thank you.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

B. BROOKWELL: I'm going to ask you some questions now that take you to documents, so I just want to walk through how I want to do that to help with the translation. So for your benefit on your end, the exhibits are P-153 and P-154, and I've provided the excerpts to the translators. So what I propose to do is I'll read the sections out, and then pause to allow the translation of the sections, and then I'll ask my questions.

Is that – okay.

So first, I'm looking at P-153, starting at page 3. The second bullet point on that page is what I'll be reading, and this is a letter from the Child and Youth Advocate to the then-Minister of Health and Community Services in 2004.

I'm then gonna turn over the page and read the last sentence of the second paragraph on page 4.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Can you repeat that again?

B. BROOKWELL: Yes, of course. I'm gonna turn over the page and read the last sentence of the second paragraph.

Okay, so it reads here:

"Child, Youth and Family Services are delivered from a crisis management perspective and there is little or no prevention and early intervention services. Child protection services significantly fall short of meeting legislative and provincial practice standards. There exists a significant lack of alternate care resources for children and in Sheshatshiu it has been indicated that while there are thirty caregiver homes, few of those are licensed. Questions have also been raised regarding the approval process for child welfare placements which is the most common placement resource in both Innu communities (there are 114 such placements in Sheshatshiu and 58 in Natuashish.) In both these instances the appropriate placement supervision is not provided. The ability to intervene is severely impacted by the shortage of trained professional staff."

And then over the page, "In my opinion, there is a great risk for potential tragedy. The standards applied with respect to these programs would be unacceptable elsewhere."

And before I ask my questions, I wanna read out the one section on Exhibit P-154, page 6. And I'm going to read the second half of the second paragraph, and then

pause for the translation. And I should note, this is a report of a social worker working in Sheshatshiu, Colleen White.

It says:

“Otherwise, I would lose all faith in a system that does not support its own mandate to make efforts to intervene early in the lives of children at risk and to even prevent child maltreatment and family breakdown. Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) in Sheshatshiu, NL, is at present a completely reactionary agency that fails miserably even in its ability to react. This truth needs to be known and change must come.”

So my question is two parts. It's – I know this is 2004, but to your knowledge, did these concerns come to the department's attention? And I mean later, did they come to your attention? And if the answer to that is yes, then what, if anything, did the department do to respond to these concerns?

M. SHALLOW: It's Michelle. I probably would have been the only one on the panel –

B. BROOKWELL: Okay, we're just gonna pause – sorry, Michelle –

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Wait, hold on.

B. BROOKWELL: – just for the translation.

M. SHALLOW: Oh, sorry.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

B. BROOKWELL: Okay, please go ahead.

M. SHALLOW: I probably am the only person on the panel who worked at the department at the time. I have never – I mean, it's over 20 or 25 years ago so – my

memory is not that great. But I don't recall ever being – you know, ever seeing these documents, number one.

And in '98, you know, as Wanda had already alluded to, a lot of the service delivery had been devolved to a health board. So the Labrador integrated health board would've had responsibility for delivering services in all of the Labrador region, and maybe part of Grenfell, I don't know. I don't remember. But I personally was not made aware of any of the contents of the documents, that I can remember.

B. BROOKWELL: I do have a couple more questions, but I'm wondering if it would be a good time to have a –

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Can I have a break?

B. BROOKWELL: – break because there's been a lot of translation.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

Granted; 10 minutes.

Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you so much, everybody, and welcome back. We'll pick up where we left off.

And the Commissioners want to say that the approach you've taken, Sir, by providing the background information for the interpreters works very well. We're pleased with your approach.

B. BROOKWELL: Thank you.

I have some questions now about –

W. LUNDRIGAN: Taking her off – it off mute.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, sorry.

B. BROOKWELL: Oh, can you hear me on that end?

I have some questions now about Innu children in care out of the communities, and to start, I'm just going to direct to the Commissioners some exhibits that speak to this. I'm not going to go to them, just for reference. And that's Exhibit P-165, page 2; Exhibit P-166, page 3; Exhibit P-167, page 1; and Exhibit P-168, page 2.

So those are just for reference for the Commissioners, because my question is – for the panel – when a child is taken out of the community, where does the funding come from to support services and care for that child?

J. BARNES: Hi. Michelle may have things to add here, but when children are removed from care and are – or from home, sorry, and are placed in a foster care placement, whether it's in community or out of community, the placement provider would be provided funding directly from the department. But that would ultimately be reimbursed through a funding agreement or an agreement with the federal government to provide financial resources for children in care.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay, can I ask you a question? I did not understand; did you say the federal government –

J. BARNES: So the provincial government would pay the foster parent and then the federal government would reimburse the province.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yeah, that's Jennifer Barnes.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Jennifer Barnes.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

B. BROOKWELL: The next question I have has two parts in time. So what, to your knowledge, has the department done to reduce the number of children being placed out of the community? And the two parts are: I'm wanting to know about before 2017, and then after 2017.

INTERPRETER RICH: Ben, is this one on page – number four?

B. BROOKWELL: Yeah, number four and then the two – the last two lines – the last two points.

J. BARNES: I'm just wondering if it might perhaps work better if Michelle will start at pre-2017, and then I could speak to the more recent time?

B. BROOKWELL: Yeah, that would be great.

M. SHALLOW: Will that be translated?

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

M. SHALLOW: Okay?

B. BROOKWELL: Yeah, please go ahead.

M. SHALLOW: So you're asking what efforts were made to reduce the number of Innu children in out of community? And I – honestly, I can't even remember. I mean, that's my genuine answer. I'm sure that there was some work done with the regional folks identifying the children and I guess maybe if there were any policy adjustments that we needed to make, I'm sure we would have done that. But I cannot tell you specifics at this time because I simply don't remember.

J. BARNES: I think there were a number of things we focused on in that period from 2016 onwards, to when I left the department in 2021. I think the first thing I would say is that it's my understanding there was significant dialogue and efforts made between elected leadership in the community, regional operation staff and IRT staff to prevent children from coming out of community.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Stop there.

J. BARNES: Okay.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

J. BARNES: Another point I would make is that – and Michelle alluded to this, and I think this improved over time – where IRT staff or regional CSSD staff identified policy barriers that would have prevented families from being approved, we made efforts to remove those barriers while still ensuring that homes were safe and appropriate to provide care.

And the other thing I would point out is the collaborative work that was done to develop the Innu placement homes. I think they have provided a resource that had not – I know they have provided a resource – that was not previously available.

So the first opened in 2018, and subsequent homes opened after that. So they provide long-term options for young people in the group homes, but also provided the emergency placement resource. And emergency placement homes are designed to be short-term while other options are identified. So to provide care perhaps while a family is being assessed and approved as a foster home, for example.

B. BROOKWELL: So I'm coming up to the end of my time, but I have one follow-up question. You mentioned barriers for foster families. Could you tell us a little bit about those barriers, in your experience?

J. BARNES: A couple of examples that I can recall would be some policy requirements around children having their own room; when in community, it may be a space for issue or it may be a comfort issue to share a bedroom, for example. Having to have record checks, provide clearance, when families have been over-represented in the child welfare system or over-represented in the criminal justice system and how do we balance; 'cause that's still important, but how do we consider that history while also considering how someone is doing currently and what that looks like and the care that they can provide. So addressing those in policy to allow staff and Innu staff to work together when those issues arise.

B. BROOKWELL: Thank you, Ms. Barnes and Ms. Shallow and Ms. Lundrigan. Those are the questions that I have. I appreciate your time and participating with us today.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yes, on behalf of the Commissioners, we echo Mr. Brookwell's comments.

We now move to an opportunity for counsel to be able to ask questions on redirect. So, Mr. Brookwell, if you can abandon that seat and I'll ask if any questions will be sought from these three witnesses. Ms. Ouellette.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Commissioners. Can we ask for about a five-minute break? We don't need a 10-minute break, but about five.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Absolutely. We'll have a break for five minutes and then we'll determine whether or not we have further questions.

Thank you.

Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you all very much for your patience.

We'll just wait 'til our witnesses come online again.

Thank you.

Hi John Paul. How are you?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: All right.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good to see you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I know.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: You know? Okay, good to see you.

Ms. Ouellette, do you have any redirect?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you, Commissioners.

I have no questions for these witnesses.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

[Dialogue between Interpreter Byrne and Interpreter Rich in Innu-aimun.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: What are they? Are they panel?

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yes, I'll clarify that. Ms. Ouellette is a lawyer representing Jennifer Barnes, as well as Ms. Shallow.

[Dialogue between Interpreter Byrne and Interpreter Rich in Innu-aimun.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

We'll now ask whether my fellow Commissioners have any questions of the witnesses, and I'll put that to Commissioner Devine.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Thank you, Commissioner. Yes, I do have a few questions, so I will proceed.

I first want to acknowledge the three panel members, two of them who I have known for quite some time back in, what we would call the Social Services days. And basically haven't seen them since that, so that's almost 30 years ago.

While Wanda worked in Corrections, Ms. Shallow worked in Child Protection in another office, but I think in the same office that I was in on the last of my days, when I retired or resigned from the department in 1998.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Good, good.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Also, Ms. Barnes I met about three years ago when the Inquiry started, so she's much younger than myself, and I think the other two panel members.

Okay, I have a few questions, and the first one is a more – broader question related to trauma.

The Commissioners have heard from a number of Elders in the communities with regard to the history of forced settlement, which I think is the appropriate term, into the community, and the resulting impacts of that settlement.

And for the Innu, it's important to point out that this wasn't an individualized trauma, it wasn't a family issue. It was a – the whole community that experienced trauma at that time. So even if there were some people in

the community who are not directly impacted, they were impacted by so many other members in the community.

Today, I believe, there is a – much more of a recognition of trauma that has been experienced by the Innu and by the intergenerational trauma because it was passed from generation to generation.

So my question to each of the panel members is: Was there a point, generally speaking, when departmental staff became aware of the whole notion of trauma in the communities, and being trauma-sensitive. Can you speak to how – when that – when you might have seen this, and was that part of, then, the discussions and policies that were developed?

A big question, but do your best.

M. SHALLOW: Hi, it's Michelle. I'll start. Yes, Mike, that is a loaded, big question for sure.

I started working with the department at the provincial level in 2002. And I remember – you know, as a policy analyst – and I remember being part of a group that would go to Labrador occasionally, because there was – I don't know if it was an MOU or an MC from government where there was gonna be development of a joint Innu-Government board to deliver social – child welfare services.

Do you want to translate?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yeah, that's perfect.

INTERPRETER RICHE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

M. SHALLOW: And I – it was my first time being introduced to those issues and being at that table. I would say I was more passive

a member on the table. The provincial director of the day was there, and – among other government representatives – and, you know, there was a lot of work done to try to get to devolve services to the Innu, even then.

And I know that that didn't proceed for many reasons. I think federal funding was a big issue, that I can recall. And then we stopped – you know, that work kind of stopped, I think. And I can't tell you exactly why or when, but for me, my recall of understanding more about Labrador and the Innu and the climate and the trauma really began a little bit after that, but definitely when the CYFS Department was created in '09.

I'm halting for the translation again.

[Dialogue between Interpreter Byrne and Interpreter Rich in Innu-aimun.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Michelle, can you repeat that at the end? What is it? Did you say 909 or 109? What (inaudible).

M. SHALLOW: No, I said I felt like things had changed and we became more aware of the issues in the Innu and Inuit communities when the CYFS Department was created in 2009.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay.

M. SHALLOW: And going forward, you know.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Thank you.

Did you hear that?

INTERPRETER RICH: (Inaudible.)

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

M. SHALLOW: And I'll just preface my final comments by saying that frankly I don't think personally I could ever understand it because I didn't live it, but when the department was created, there was more of a coming together and understanding through the staff and, you know, people like Lyla and other staff that worked in the Innu communities, to try and help us understand the intergenerational trauma that folks in the community had been through, and – excuse me – I think – and again, I'm only speaking for me, my own experience – that no, I tried as a provincial director to respond either through policy changes or, you know, program design and development and including people whenever and wherever we could do that. And I think that work continued and still continues, you know, since I left the department.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Michelle, were you a regional director, did you say? Provincial?

INTERPRETER RICH: Provincial.

M. SHALLOW: Provincial director for policy.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: (Inaudible) Ms. Lundrigan or Barnes want to respond?

W. LUNDRIGAN: Well, maybe me, because I'm the oldest, so I have the longest history of these three women. And it's very nice to see you, Mike, and Judge Iggy, it's so – such a pleasure to see your face again.

You know, that's a loaded question, and I think, you know, we really have to go back to when did we really understand the impact of colonialism on the Province of

Newfoundland and the people of Newfoundland, in addition to the even probably more profound impact of colonialism on Indigenous people of our land.

So once we started to understand that – I think for me in my career I had the benefit of working with the Department of Justice and Corrections for many years before I went back to Child Welfare. I did start in Child Welfare on Bell Island in 1980.

When I went to Corrections, of course, absolutely, I knew that Indigenous people were well over-represented in our prison system, as our probation clients; so, I was very familiar with some of the issues they were facing in Indigenous communities.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I'm gonna stop you there. That's great. We'll allow translation.

W. LUNDRIGAN: Thank you, sorry.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

What's your name again?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Wanda.

INTERPRETER RICH: Wanda.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

When – what year was it you were working?

INTERPRETER BYRNE: 1980.

W. LUNDRIGAN: Well, in the '80s – I started in 1980 in Child Welfare.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

Corrections, was it?

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Corrections.

W. LUNDRIGAN: In '82. In 1982, I went to Corrections.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

W. LUNDRIGAN: Okay, so during my tenure with Corrections, I had the benefit of travelling to Nain and to Goose Bay and Sheshatshiu on several occasions because I ran the provincial probation office, Community Corrections. So all those opportunities gave me some insight – some – and I mean, probably very little. Because I was as ignorant – as many of us were – in terms of the impact of, for example, residential schools; people being torn out of their communities, children removed from parents, so those children grew up never even – losing their culture, losing their language, not learning how to parent, because they didn't have parents who were allowed to care for them.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Hold there, please.

Thank you.

W. LUNDRIGAN: So fast forward, my – I guess my learning began sometime in the '80s and through the '90s. And as a result of my trips to Labrador, I was familiar with some of the Child Welfare staff and staff from the regional health authorities, so I was learning from them as well, what their work environment was like.

It was during that time that I would have met Lyla, for example, for the first time. I learned from my – I had a probation officer who worked in Goose Bay who was married to an Innu person. I learned a tremendous amount from her and her lived experience in the community. She lived in Northwest Territories.

Is that enough? I don't know when to stop.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: That's fine.

W. LUNDRIGAN: I never know when to stop.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Northwest Territories –

[Dialogue between Interpreter Byrne and Interpreter Rich in Innu-aimun.]

W. LUNDRIGAN: Sorry, North West River. I'm so sorry.

INTERPRETER RICH: Okay, we were just trying to figure out did you say Northwest Territories.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Hold on one sec.

[Dialogue between Interpreter Byrne and Interpreter Rich in Innu-aimun.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

W. LUNDRIGAN: I had also had the benefit of having been to Conne River, and to have been able to learn a fair bit from their history, because I was very interested in learning how they had progressed and had several meetings with Chief Joe, and ended up when I went back to Child Welfare in 2009, having a regional director, Judy White, who was extremely familiar with Indigenous culture, especially the history from Conne River.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Stop there.

W. LUNDRIGAN: Then I went to –

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: We'll stop you for one second.

W. LUNDRIGAN: I know.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

W. LUNDRIGAN: Then I had the opportunity to work at Executive Council, which is basically the Premier's Office. Through that experience, I had the opportunity to work with many departments: Health, Social Services – or Child, Youth and Family Services – would have been part of my portfolio as a social policy analyst – Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs. So I was reading information that crossed many departments, and included some issues of Innu and Indigenous people, and I got a different kind of lens, and I was privy to different kinds of discussions that government would have been having.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you.

INTERPRETER RICH: Can you repeat where you were working again?

W. LUNDRIGAN: Cabinet Secretariat.

The office – the bureaucratic arm of the Premier's Office.

[Dialogue between Interpreter Rich and Interpreter Byrne in Innu-aimun.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Now I don't want to cut you off, Ms. Lundrigan, but you've given us a very good synopsis of your sensitivity to the Indigenous issues. So

if you have some final comments, then certainly go ahead.

W. LUNDRIGAN: Yeah, so when I went – I guess my – what I'm trying to say is that when I went to Child, Youth and Family Services in 2009, when the department was created, I had a very strong view that we needed to do different things in Labrador. I didn't have the – all the answers. I had none. But I had a very strong view that we needed to be devolving to the Innu and the Inuit governments for the provision of services. It started that way when I got there.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Family youth – child family – what was it? Child, Youth and Family Services.

W. LUNDRIGAN: Child, Youth and Family Services.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: So, Ms. Barnes, if you could give us a brief synopsis.

Thank you.

J. BARNES: I think my understanding of trauma evolved over time, and I think like many, I felt I had a good understanding of what a traumatic event might be at an individual level. I don't recall having an understanding or even an awareness of intergenerational trauma early in my career. It's something that would have developed later, and perhaps not until I was doing some policy work and had more exposure.

And I think for me – and I'm speaking of me personally, but this would have impacted

how I did my work – for me, I would have spent some time, as Michelle and Wanda mentioned, thinking about the issues that were present in community and why those issues were present and what was causing those, not on an individual level but the broader level.

And it really, for me, wouldn't have been until the point in my career when I began working directly with the Innu in a different way, and I think the same would be true for my work with Nunatsiavut, and really understanding the impact at that broader level. And I think that then influenced the way we looked at issues and looked at how to address them.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I'm going to exercise my executive authority and not really stop Commissioner Devine from asking any more questions, but in the interest of getting through the morning, we're going to move ahead. Professor Devine – thank goodness he's a professor and not a lawyer – he'd keep us here four days answering one question. So obviously he taught his students well.

INTERPRETER RICH: Can you repeat that again?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yeah.

INTERPRETER RICH: Okay, thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: I have to put a stop to the questions at this time. He asks complicated questions and it takes a long time to answer his questions.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: You okay with that, Sir?

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: (Inaudible) one more question?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Make it fast.

C. URQUHART: I'm just – we've been asked to have a five-minute health break, if that's possible, and then to do the last question?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Of course.

Five minutes, please.

Recess

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Welcome back, everybody.

We know that Interpreter Lisa has to leave in 15 minutes, and as we did yesterday, we'll allow Ms. Byrne to continue on, but we are wrapping up at the last stages of the formal hearings. So we'll be done shortly.

I think we will give leave to Commissioner Devine to ask a supplementary or another question before we're done. And I'll let the interpreters interpret that first.

So Lisa has to leave, Nympha's going to stay for a few minutes. We're almost done, and Commissioner Devine has one more question.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay, thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Let them say that first.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Oh, sorry.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay, in trying to be as succinct with this question, and to get through and to get the understand – I guess an understanding for the Commissioners on this particular issue, I'm going to present a case example for the panel, which I'm sure they will be familiar with from their studies and the like. And then I want to – you to talk about a case example when there was the Family Services program.

So the example is something like this: A single mom in Sheshatshiu and in receipt of social assistance has four children, three of who are pre-school. And a referral is made; mom is very stressed out, and so there's two scenarios: one is where she's deemed in need of protection and one where she is not.

I'll hold there for now.

INTERPRETER RICH: What did you mean, three kids and a –

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Four children.

INTERPRETER RICH: Okay, four children.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Can you say that again? In need of protection? What was that, that need protection, you said. What else was it, you say?

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Oh, one where she's in need of protection or protective intervention and one where she's not.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Okay.

[Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: And –

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Oh, sorry.

INTERPRETER RICH: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: The assessment shows that she would benefit from respite services so she can get a break twice a week for two hours.

So then the question is: Prior to 2010, if she wasn't defined as in need of protection, but needed support, would she get services? And post-2010, would she get services?

W. LUNDRIGAN: (Inaudible.)

M. SHALLOW: Hi, I'll attempt an answer.

And I think for reference for the Commissioners, the whole issue of section 10, the Family Services Program, is very well outlined in the Clinical Services Review of 2008. And my answer, Mike, will be that before 2010, what that individual would get would look different depending on what part of the province they lived in. And the clinical review showed us that, of, like – you can translate.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

I have to translate yours first. When you were saying that the extended question needs support program or something?

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Yes, the services, would she – would the mom be eligible for services in the legislation prior to 2010, and then would she be eligible in the new legislation of 2010?

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

INTERPRETER RICH: Michelle, can you repeat your question – your answer?

M. SHALLOW: I can try.

INTERPRETER RICH: No, just from the part when you said what part of the province they are in.

M. SHALLOW: Right, okay.

The clinical review showed us that families would get a different service depending on what part of the province they lived in. There was different practices in different health regions.

C. URQUHART: And just, Commissioners, for the record that is P-164, is the Clinical Services Review.

M. SHALLOW: And I think that if you – just for the Commissioners' purposes, on page 23 and 24 of Exhibit P-164, it does outline what the Clinical Services Review found about the Family Services Program, which was basically a lot of confusion and variability – or different applications, I should say – of that program. Following in 2010, there was very much a lot of clarity brought to the legislation about the mandate of the Child Welfare program and I think there would probably be a more consistent approach to providing services to families.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: So I think my final question would be: Were services overall more available to those who were at high risk of coming into Child Protection Services after 2010?

M. SHALLOW: I'm gonna say no. In fact, I feel like with the clarity of the mandate and the role of child protection, we were able to focus on supporting parents and children where there were issues in the home, and identifying, really, the services that could help mitigate the risk and keep children at home. And I gave an example yesterday of a parenting program that we developed provincially and adapted, I believe in – on my recall, I believe we adapted it with the staff at the – in the Innu community, Sheshatshiu for sure, where, you know, it was a focus on supporting parents with

whatever issue was present to help maintain the children at home.

So when you understand your mandate and you're clear on your role and your goals, it's easier for people doing the work to understand their role and what services they need to provide families to help, number one, maintain families and children together, and then number two, provide the services they need.

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay, I'll leave it there. Thank you to the panel for your attendance here, and I'll move it over to our Chair, Mr. Igloliorte, to close the remarks.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Yes, I'm going to allow all the Commissioners to make closing remarks, and Commissioner Devine, would you like to sum up the week's work, and then I'll ask the same question to Commissioner Qupee.

Sorry. Go ahead, Nympha.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

COMMISSIONER DEVINE: Okay, thank you.

Yes, I'd just like to thank everybody for being here this week at the formal hearings. As I think everybody knows, the pre-recordings was a new format for us, and the beauty of that is that we could also play the recordings at the same time in both dialects of Innu-aimun. We look forward to any comments that people have on what they think of that, if they think it worked well or otherwise, or any improvements, we'd welcome those comments and suggestions. And once again, thank you.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you, Sir.

And now Commissioner Qupee.

COMMISSIONER QUPEE: [Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

I'll speak in Innu first.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

First of all, I'd like to say that we're grateful for the communities for welcoming us and their willingness to share freely their time and their stories. Again, thanking the people that came forward to share their experiences and their truths, and to remind them that we have their certificates and their USBs of the stories that they shared with us. So we have them here, and it's – and a certificate of appreciation.

We are grateful to the three governments, the Innu, Newfoundland and Labrador and Canada, for their participation and for their representatives to come forward and be here with us today.

So thank you. Tshinashkumitin.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much, Nashtash. Also for translating your statement.

In conclusion of the formal hearings, I do have a couple of comments to make as well. Thank you, especially, to the four witnesses for this formal hearing: Lyla Andrew, Michelle Shallow, Wanda Lundrigan and Jennifer Barnes. Your knowledge, your experience, your perspectives are all very valuable for the work of the Inquiry.

Anyone who's watching the broadcast we have on the website, as well as community members, can see that we had two of the witnesses giving testimony via our internet distance service. The witnesses testifying from St. John's were granted the ability to give their testimony from there because they demonstrated exceptional circumstances, where they need not be present in the community.

We interpreted our Terms of Reference given to us by the Innu, by Canada and Newfoundland and Labrador, to have all witnesses come to this community and allow people to see Innu culture, Innu language, the strength of the Innu, the resilience and their humour as well, in person.

As Commissioner Devine has pointed out, all these witnesses have appeared before our counsel and given their sworn testimony. As Commissioner Qupee pointed out, this process has worked very well. We have two of our lawyers here and two more in St. John's who work with other counsel and with the witnesses to prepare this week.

Thank you all for – the witnesses especially – for demonstrating your empathy for the Innu people, the trust relationships that you have developed, and in particular, your willingness to assist the Inquiry as we work towards the conclusion.

A special thanks to our interpreters, Nympha and Lisa, and to Ruth and Paula for making all of this – these details work out. And finally, thanks to all of you who are present for allowing us to work within your community and to continue the work of the Inquiry.

While we draw the formal hearings for this week to a close, we still have two private sessions to complete this afternoon, and two private sessions with individuals who want to present to the Inquiry tomorrow morning.

Final comments go to Ms. Urquhart or Mr. Collins.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: [Mushuau-aimun spoken.]

Who's the other one? Mr. Collins and who?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Ms. Urquhart, also known as Caitlin.

INTERPRETER BYRNE: Cait – Caitlin.

C. URQUHART: Thank you, Commissioners.

I'd just like to echo those sentiments and the gratitude, and that is all. We're ready to conclude for the day.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Thank you very much.

C. URQUHART: Penote, would you be able to step forward and do a prayer for us?

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Please, prayer.

Penote?

ELDER ANTUAN: First of all, I'd like to thank everyone who came today. And also to thank all the Commissioners and the people who are here with us. And at the same time, I'd like to mention that one of our Elder, which you have seen her, and I haven't heard anything from her, but I was told she's in St. John's for her eye, looking for her eye specialist. So that's okay, because I was worried because I haven't seen her since we started this hearing. That was Elizabeth Penashue. And I'm very thankful when Anastasia Qupee told me he's okay. She'll be home today, I hope so.

And I'd like to say a prayer for change. Today I remember my fellow Elder who we named our school at this time, Peenamin McKenzie. I was only 12 years old when I was working alongside her as a teacher, but as a student for me. He – she taught me to become Christian. She taught me everything, from the prayers that I used to have saying at the meetings, at the gatherings, just about everywhere.

And I still remember her just if it was yesterday, when she told me: Remember what I said. That's what she told – she said: Remember what I said. Take care. The words that you have said to the prayer.

Every now and then, it reminds me to remember her because what I thought in my thoughts, in my memory, in my mind, I thought she was very Catholic. She knew her prayers, everything.

When a priest was here, our priest was Father Pirson. When he passed away, the Peenamin McKenzie, I was trying for her to be called a saint. But I – as a matter of fact, I failed. I failed. There was too many things – I only work by myself then – to call her a saint. But I guess that would be our first saint in Innu, but I failed. There were things that I couldn't do it because there were – there were things that I couldn't do it. There were things that I could do it. But there's no time for it. There wasn't enough time for me. I wish I was much younger than I am now. I wish. But things happen you can't control. You can't control. You just have to go along with it.

And I want to say I remember her in my prayer, every prayer that I have – I did say at the meetings, at the gathering, anywhere. Anywhere I say a prayer, I remember her very much, just like it was yesterday.

And I'm very thankful for you all to listen to me.

Thank you.

Now I'm gonna say a prayer.

[Sheshatshiu-aimun spoken.]

Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER IGLOLIORTE: Okay, thank you.

ELDER ANTUAN: Yeah.