

Statutory Declaration

I, Okpik, Charlie, Quaqtak, 1942 

(Name, first name, address, birth date)

I do solemnly declare that,

Ever since before 2011, his wife died. It's because she had intestine surgery, and the surgery was successful, but the thread wasn't the right size, when they started stitching her. And ever since that happened, when they came back here, she was complaining to the nurse that it was getting too hard on her, the threads, and the intestines were hurting more and more, even though she kept going back to the hospital. And the nurse told her that she was leaving for the hospital, instead of in a clinic. She was supposed to be sent away to Kuujjuaq for the follow-ups, because the thread wasn't the right size. But it was all lies, it wasn't true that... She wasn't leaving.

Q2: So she didn't leave?

R2: She never left. Because she never left, that really triggered her, because she was already prepared for the upcoming follow-ups. Because it was a lie that she.... It took a toll on her. Maybe that was one of the reasons her life was shorter. And within those days, even though it was an emergency state... that she wasn't going anywhere. ... The doctor told her that she is no longer travelling to the hospital. She was all prepared. This has been triggering him too, even today, that this was a mistreatment, and misinformation that was given to them. And he knows that it was a lie. She was supposed to go for the follow-ups

Q3: Just to precise, the intervention was to the intestines. She had a surgery and... you were talking about the stitches.

R3: Yes, the thread of the stitches.

Q4: Ok, the thread was not the right one, or the right size.

R4: Yes, it was too thin.

Declarer signature _____

Declared before me, _____

at _____ on _____

Q5: Ok and when the person is talking about the doctor... At the end, there, he's talking about a doctor. Maybe check if the doctor was stationed here or if it was a doctor from... distance.

R5: There are doctors travelling for each community. Each community has their own doctor but... travels. From one community after another. There is no doctor in place permanently.

Q6: ... permanently. But the doctor saw her, not just a nurse. Can you confirm that?

R6: She kept going back to the nursing station, with the nurse.

She went there many times. He used to follow her. He does not have knowledge... for her being seen by the doctor here. The nurse always informs doctors, though. He knows about that. Doctors not here. They're based in Kuujjuaq. They were informed in Kuujjuaq.

Q7: They received the information. Can we... Because we're probably going to go see the files, so if we could precise the time of the surgery, probably this would help. Just trace back all the files.

R7: He does not have exact date but it was before 2011.

Q8: Before 2011. And can we take down the name of his wife?

R8: Lucy Okpik.

Q9: Et sa date de naissance.

R9: He does not have that birthdate.

Q10: Ok, does he... Just to have an order... How old would she be? Does he know how old would she be or how old she was at that time?

R10: He does not remember her age, but he knows that it was before 2011.

I know this is not the only case, it is... There are many cases like this. I'm among them, he says. This is done? We may proceed.

If he has the birthdate of his wife, he will come back and give it to us.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q11: Ok, maybe we can offer to pass by his house if he wishes.

R11: He does not remember if he has it in hand, or at his place.

Q12: Ok, so maybe let him know that we're going to be here today, all day, and Sunday, all day... in the morning, in case we're taking the plane later in the afternoon... so in the morning, we should be here.

R12: He is more comfortable doing this by himself. What he means is he's uncomfortable being served.

Q13: Assisted, or... ok.

R13: We're moving on to another topic.

Q14: Ok.

R14: Second topic is about the police service. As an elder, he doesn't speak English nor French and it is very uncomfortable when he doesn't understand laws. When it is not explained by the policemen, because they do not have translators. He has tried to mention this to the delegates, people who goes for the meetings. He has tried to mention it many times. That it is uncomfortable, when the policeman goes to his place and start talking to him in English or French and he cannot respond because he does not understand any of these languages. Even though he tried to talk to them, he doesn't speak the language they speak. So, there's always unbalance in between them.

Some of his children and grandchildren, when they're being taken away to the detention... to other places... let's say to the... Detention? St-Jérôme? And he started... How do you say? Not just incarcerated but... his daughter goes to the prison quite a few times.

Most of the elders support their children when they're being incarcerated. They have to worry about their money. Mostly, they have to worry about the phone bills. This mostly is the case of elderly people. When he doesn't speak or understand English, it is very uncomfortable for him to understand how the law works. Because police do not have an interpreter, none whatsoever. He wishes to see translators, interpreters, in each community, because he knows he is not the only one, even here... and in other communities. And he is grateful that is children are protected, taken care of by detentions, but it is uncomfortable for him, knowing that they cannot support themselves. Because he understands there is a language barrier in between laws and humans. He wishes to see translators in more places, and every time, when the cops knock on his door... He prefers to see, a suggestion that they bring their own translators. That's the recommendation he has. And that is the end of his story, he says.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

Q15: That's clear. Would he accept me to ask some questions about the first story?

R15: You may continue.

Q16: Ok. What I was wondering is if he could have any discussion, any communication, any explanation, from the nurse, himself, about what was going on, about the situation of his wife?

R16: Never been informed. They never had any discussion.

No, there was never any discussion. They never explained to him how she had died. No one ever explained how she died, of what.

Q17: Was there anybody else, any other person from the family of his wife, in any way, that he knows that this person would have been informed by the authorities? Either health authorities or other authorities, on the reasons... what caused her death.

R17: No, no one is informed as Inuit.

Q18: And the last question would be: Was he available to receive the information at this time? Was he...

R18: He was openly available.

Q19: That's it.

R19: Maybe his daughters were informed but he is sure that they were never told. We, as Inuits, no one informs us, how the death occurs.

His wife went to the clinic and he encouraged her to be seen by another nurse. There are some people who get to have these services but (...)24:13 wasn't complete, because when it is not complete, some people become hesitant, not to go back, knowing that they will not be served. Even the questions they ask are not being answered. So, there are cases like that that they don't want to go back to the clinic, knowing that they're not going to be served. And most of the time, they're just given some Tylenols. That's about it.

As elderly people, we don't really want to bother nurses. Mostly at night.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

As elderly people, we go there mostly in the mornings, because we do not want to bother the frontline workers, especially at the hospital.

Q20: I had another question. Just to check if... about the fact that they didn't received the information about his wife and why she wasn't transferred. What caused her death, for example? Did he complain about this situation to any authorities, any organization other than ours?

R20: No, they have never filed a complaint. Finally, we're starting to see the complaint department. This is very new to us.

There is one in Kuujjuaq, we know about it, but not in each community.

Q21: If the same situation were to happen today, does he know where he could go to, apart from our organization, to complain about a similar situation?

R21: I might do it by the phone, to file complaint, if this occurs again, in a similar case.

It's very expensive to get there too, to Kuujjuaq. To file complaint in a case like that, similar case like that. It's going to cost him, too.

Q22: So he would try to find the phone number to reach the organization he knows in Kuujjuaq, to address his complaint.

R22: Yes.

Q23: Ok, that completes...

R23: He is saying... Because he doesn't want his to be repetitive to other elderly people. If this occurs again... He doesn't want it to happen to other elderly people. He is saying this in order for this to stop, for this to end. And he is grateful that we are here.

Q24: Tell him that I am grateful that he accepts to express himself about the difficult experience, and that I recognize his will to have things change for the better for people like him.

R24: As elders, we have a hard time... it is our way of expressing... that we do not bother all the time. We have respect to front line workers, we have respect... our surroundings. Thank You.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant