

## Statutory Declaration

I, Robinson, Wayne at Native Montreal DDB: [REDACTED]  
(Name, first name, address, birth date)

I do solemnly declare that, on May 11<sup>th</sup> 2018 at Native Montreal

Q1: (Introduction)

Social services:

Q1 : My name is Emmanuel Morin, I'm the investigation officer for the public enquiry. I'm with Mr. Wayne Robinson, who's working at Native Montreal as an intervention worker?

R1: Yes, I do.

Q2: Mr. Robinson has a few topics to talk about so, we can go right now. Which topic do you want to start with?

### Services sociaux:

R2: We'll just start with the social services, because I think some of my feedback with them is very pertinent and very clear, because of the experiences I've had working within the social services. I have eighteen years of experience, now, working with the social services, at different levels. Not always in Quebec but in the last five years, working in social services specifically for indigenous peoples, in different roles. As coordinator, as now doing the intervention and managing that project. In that capacity, I think one of the themes I've seen, that has given considerable benefit, is the idea of hiring indigenous staff.

But then also, one of the challenges I find, is we often don't have the correct supports to ensure these indigenous staff maintain self-care, confidentiality and boundaries, and I think it's because of that closeness between community and the worker. So, I sort of find that that's an extra burden that we place on indigenous workers. And it's really easy to say: "Oh, you're Native, you're working for those services, you should work for Native social service." But people don't realize that also comes with, again, this tremendous burden of representing the communities that we're serving, and I'd really like  
Declarer signature \_\_\_\_\_

Declared before me, \_\_\_\_\_

at \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

to see... I think we can go over study after study that shows that having representation within your staff definitely allows for greater connection, a lot further of that relationship building. It really offers a culturally secure service because indigenous people don't have to go into this service and explain: "This is why I'm doing stuff." It's an understanding that people have from that lived experience. A lot of agencies that I've worked with and partnered with, attempt that model.

Q3: Can you name some agencies?

R3: Yes. Well, with Native Montreal, right now, I believe we're at 100% indigenous staff, 100% indigenous board and governance. I think a big part in that is we also have supports for our staff. We pay closer to a living wage, so it's not minimum wage entry-level positions. Because our board and direction are indigenous, they understand that there's going to be challenges with indigenous staff and they seem pretty adaptable to that.

At *Projet Autochtones du Québec*, most of our board was indigenous, our direction has always been indigenous since I've been there, but our staff have been very hard to maintain indigenous workers. I think a big part of that was that it's an entry-level position, a lot of times, to be an intervention worker. And it's really hard to find indigenous workers, and once you have them, because you're putting them in a very high-pressure emergency service, even if they're non-indigenous... It's hard, it's hard to maintain staff. And I think there's room there, because a lot of the times, the funders are the SAA, for most of it, but also other funders who are funding indigenous organizations. I think there's room there for them to understand that, because they're asking for this increased burden on indigenous workers, there's also a way that they can offer supports. Maybe they can build into their RFP, requests for proposals, to attempt to have that culturally secure service by having as much indigenous workers as you can, maybe there's also a pot of money there to provide services to the workers so that they can maintain them and ensure that we're having healthy workers. Is there anything else I wanted to say specifically on social services?

Q4: And you work with people who are going to find services like the CLSC, here?

R4: Yes. We work with a lot of non-Indigenous services.

Q5: How did they describe the services they received when you talked to them?

R5: This is where we get a wide variety of responses. Some indigenous people we see, some people within my caseload will come in: "I don't want to go to an indigenous service", a lot of times for fear of, like "Is it going to be my aunt who's working there?" So again, you go back to those boundaries and that burden of being indigenous with an indigenous service. For that reason, they prefer non-

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

indigenous services. You have some people that just come in and they're like: "Yeah, I go to that service and it works". But more often than not, its people coming in, saying they went to the service and they weren't treated like everyone else. This is when we get those discussions: Is it racism? Is there an understanding there?

What we do is accompaniments: I'll often go with a participant, if they're accessing a service. But, you know, I'm one person and we have 25 500 people in Montreal that identify as Indigenous, it would be impossible for me to accompany everyone on every single trip. So, we're getting these stories of their experience and, more often than not beneficial. I think if we talk about health later on, we'll be more specific about that but, when we're doing the accompaniment, things go really well. Things go really well and I think there's a challenge because when we're not there, the reports that get back from the participants are that it wasn't a positive experience.

So, do we need advocates to go on every CLSC visit, which is not achievable? And I think a lot of agencies, if they're not indigenous, they don't have a concrete understanding of the experiences of the indigenous people within Canada. For that reason, that misinformation that we get, you know... Indigenous people are... put whatever stereotype here you'd like. But there's no realities of indigenous people today, their experiences, their relationship with the Quebec and Canadian governments, and that might play out into whatever barrier they're facing. You now, if you break your leg, that might not be because you're indigenous. But if you're dealing with traumas and a distrust of social services, that might be related directly to those social services that were a big part of that mechanism of colonization and a big part of those mechanisms that led to the situation urban indigenous people face today. Without the understanding of those agencies, we don't really get to see as meaningful outcomes as they can.

When we've had the opportunity to work with other agencies, they've been very open to partnering, so I think there's a desire there, from social services, to learn more. Very few people get into the social services, at any level, to say: "I don't want to learn more, I don't want to provide the best service." But the fact is those services might not exist. We do our best to do sensitization sessions and Indigenous 101 with other organizations.

Q6: Did you have to translate, or... Did an agency ask you to translate or give you a context of the...?

R6: Definitely through Native Montreal. We've been approached by other organizations that want to be more culturally sensitive and want to, I mean, translation is an expensive thing, As much as we may be connected to people who practice and own their language, it's often a burden on us to have to say: "Yes, we want the CLSC to be offered these meaningful engagements!" But do we have the resources to pay someone to come in and to translate into one of the indigenous languages of Quebec?

Q7: You wouldn't have the resources.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

R7: No. In that regard, it would be nice to see some response where that kind of indigenization is recognized. Where we see the benefits of this. So, having other social services, that are not indigenous specific, have access to low-cost or free training for their staff to understand the indigenous realities. The low-cost or free services where they can create their promotional, their information services in indigenous languages, which has always been a huge challenge.

**Services de la protection de la jeunesse:**

Q8: You mentioned you had experience with Youth Protection?

R8: Yes. Maybe I'll start with the French DPJ, because I think they have a very specific issue.

Q9: Do you know the office? Which office it was?

R9: Not at hand, but I can find that information.

Q10: Maisonneuve, maybe?

R10: Maybe, yes. When we started our program here, it was very simple to connect with Batshaw. Batshaw has Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit, and Metis team. It doesn't encompass all of their services but it's an easy way to contact, let them know we have the service, and they can do appropriate referrals. We can work in collaboration to ensure a family's connection with Batshaw or DPJ is only for as long as necessary, for the health of the family. Often times, there isn't services out there and that's when we see people staying connected with the DPJ for much longer than they needed. With the French DPJ, they don't ask for any indigenous indicators, so they're really blind about how many indigenous people they may have on their caseload, what the unique needs of these indigenous people are, and they've even suggested that they might not have any.

We've received calls from the workers from the French DPJ: "Hey, we heard about your service, can we connect to support these children and these families through the process." So, again, not having that indigenous indicator leads to indigenous people spending longer in that system than necessary. We know indigenous people are very overrepresented in both the French and English DPJ in Montreal. But we also know, and we see from other provinces and other places around the world, when there's a culturally secure service that can be offered to the families, when the services have a better understanding of the realities of indigenous peoples, and especially DPJ's role and relationship with indigenous communities, we can see better outcomes.

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

Q11: If I understand, it's that, from the French part, they don't gather the information, so it's just like, information from here and there, we have Inuit French people, but at the end, we do not precise this need for the French...

R11: And we have a very significant francophone indigenous community in Quebec, who might not be able to get services at English Batshaw, where traditionally we have a lot of Innu participants, Mi'kmaq participants, who would, in all likelihood, be connected with the French system. So, I think it's unreasonable to think they have zero. As a matter of fact, I would assume that they'd have a significant indigenous population. Just by not asking that question of: "Who is indigenous on our caseload?", they're not able to offer the most meaningful supports they could. Because we know. We don't just have anecdotal evidence, we know that when indigenous services to people, to families through DPJ, we're often able to have that case closed earlier. Have those children more secure, have that family reunification, if it gets to that point, and happen a lot quicker.

We've seen that on our caseload already because with Batshaw services, we have a good relationship with their family workers. So, they give direct referrals to us. I'm able to meet with the families. If there's a guardianship, with the guardians who are going to be fostering, more long term. We can work close enough so that we can offer support to all actors. We can offer direct services around therapists, which becomes a challenge this time of year. Especially right now, we're using a lot of trauma therapy, that we find works very well with indigenous children, as ways to express and share what's going on in their lives. But the funding for that is often difficult. Finding indigenous therapists is often really difficult. So, we try to do the next best thing, and that's to find non-indigenous therapists, offer them training and support here at Native Montreal, so that they can offer a more culturally secure service. So, really looking at non-indigenous services, but finding a way to adapt them. When we do have indigenous social services, we work very closely. Right now, I have a roster of three indigenous therapists and, from the time that family or individual request service, usually in two or three days, we have them in a funded service.

So, it's been very useful to use stuff like NIHB, the non-insured health benefit, and the IRS, the Indian Residential School Settlement Program, which I think furthers shows just how much of an effect colonization has played. IRS is specifically for people who have an immediate family member who was through the Indian Residential School system. That's probably 80% of my caseload. So we're seeing the real effects of that intergenerational trauma. It's no more situations where we think it might be... we're seeing the actual results. We're seeing second and third generations who are presenting to myself with significant traumas, and when we look at how we're going to fund this, it's: "Oh yes, my grandfather was in a residential school!" or "My mom was in a residential school." Are these traumas directly related? Maybe, maybe not, but when you look at such a large number of people coming in that have that eligibility, it's really hard to say that's it's not related, and that it's not the absolute result of intergenerational trauma.

Q12: Did you received complaints from people going through the services, from French or Batshaw?

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

R12: Yes. The work done by the DPJ? Not from work. Sometimes, it's very necessary, sometimes, if a child is at danger, you need to have that going in and being a part of the solution. You know, the police, they never show up when it's good, when everything is going well. So, I think that's part of it. But more so, I think it's not having the understanding of indigenous peoples, of their realities. Not having any understanding of the realities of housing is a big one. When people are living on a fixed income, or even if they're working, finding an apartment that might have one bedroom for each of the children is very cost-prohibitive. And we know First Nations, and especially Inuit, customs: that's not how families connect. We have lots of extended family people that live with each other. Sharing rooms is a norm. But it comes in conflict with the DPJ's rules: "If you want your children back, this is what we need." I sort of creates a barrier that doesn't need to be there. It's something that our communities have been doing for such a long time that... Why have this artificial, very Western concept of "for a child to be healthy, they need their own bedroom"? So, that's just one more barrier. I think they're way too quick to apprehend, like I said, there's a...

Q13: Quick to..?

R13: Apprehend: they go and remove a child from its family. We get that a lot. We know that the guardians might be facing some barriers, and might be expressing those barriers in ways that are unsafe to themselves. But a lot of times, they'll still have their children. You know, if their traumas are caused by them being removed from their family because of the DPJ, and they never got support for that, never went through any sort of healing, and then when they're having children... It's reoffending. It's reoffending something that, I think, we can clearly see is a problem. Over apprehension of indigenous children within the DPJ is a problem. When we're so represented within an emergency service, it's a crisis. And if our response is to apprehend more, then we're just perpetuating a problem that's been very identified. So, I think we need to really rethink our relationship between the DPJs and indigenous communities. We know there are models out there where you can give more support to the families. The answer might not be going in and apprehending the children, the answer might be like: "How can we work with the guardians? How can we work with mom? How can we work with dad?" Sometimes it might be the aunt. How do we work with the aunt, grandma, whoever the guardians of those children are, to make sure that they're receiving support so that they can be the best guardian they can be.

Q14: Have you needed to make complaints about Youth Protection or a worker, or something... Some interventions that you think were wrong?

R14: Yes. We've had... We haven't done the formal complaint process yet. We know about it. I've definitely given feedback to specific workers. I think it might be unique to Native Montreal, but we have regular team meetings between Batshaw. So, we're able to have a personal, at arm's length relationship with those workers. So, when I hear one of the workers is not having a good relationship with one of my participants, I can call that worker and be like: I'm calling on behalf of this family, they

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant

were saying that they were having some challenges with the relationship. Is there a way I can help mediate? Is there a way that we can be part of this discussion and relationship?

Q15: So, the collaboration between Batshaw and the French part is quite different?

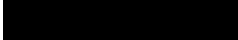
R15: We don't know the workers, they don't identify indigenous people, and I think their argument is that it's racist. "Why would we identify indigenous people, it doesn't make sense: we don't identify people from the black community, we don't identify people from the Arabic community, we don't identify people from the South-Asian community, why would we identify people from the indigenous community?" I think that's very central. I mean, we are the only community that's... If you talk about the justice system, we're the only community that's specifically mentioned through the Gladue. For that reason, the justice system needs to make accommodation.

There is a special relationship especially between the DPJ and indigenous communities. We've even got some new laws and new guidelines around that, so the fact that our laws go as far as to recognize that special relationship, we really need that practice to filter down to the workers, to the directions of the DPJs. It's not racist, it's really a result of our special relationship through colonization, through failed attempts at assimilation, where we're seeing that the Canadian and Quebec governments were in the wrong. There's been apologies, they have admitted that they've been negligent in providing the services they need, so I think what we need is for them to now go beyond apologies and go right into: "Ok, how can we fix this? What needs to be done?" And the first thing is to recognize that special relationship, and then once that gets out of the way, once that it is solidified that there is a special relationship, then they can be like: "Ok, now we need to identify the indigenous families within our service and now we need to look at our practices, at our procedures, to ensure that we're not perpetuating something we've already said sorry for." If you're going to say sorry, if you're going to acknowledge the special relationship but not make any changes, you're just perpetuating what could have been described as errors.

Police situation:

Q16: Do you have situations related to the police?

R16: We've had a really good experience. I'll start there, then we can talk about the not so good experiences. When I was at *Projet Autochtones*, the indigenous shelter, we had a few very tough cases of missing indigenous women, and really developed our relationship with one PDQ, and that was 21.

21, downtown, fell within *Projet Autochtones*'s territory, so they were dealing with a lot of our participants. Since that organization was in that PDQ, it made sense to have that special relationship. One of the first things we did was to offer a sensitization session. So, we met with two shifts, I believe, and I think they have many more than two. But in those two shifts, me and the director 

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

were able to sit down, do an indigenous 101 sensitization session, talk very frankly about who we are, what are some of the themes that police officers might see...

Q17: Agent [REDACTED] ?

R17: No, no. The director of PAQ, [REDACTED]

Q18: Ok.

R18: We delivered that service, we delivered that Indigenous 101. We told them like: "Hey, if you run into an indigenous street involved and homeless person, let them know about our service, It might help." We gave them some tips and tricks and literally within two days, we had participants to us, like: "I just had a run in with an officer and it went really well." They knew about our organization, they knew about... They drove me here and we didn't have to go through a process where... And officers were coming in and asking us: "How do you say hello in this language? How do you..." So this relationship, with an immediate two day period, had improved dramatically, because we were able to work on a very local level with the PDQ that was working in the neighborhood that was having a lot of interactions with indigenous people. So, that kind of training, we'd be seeing the direct outcomes of it. Having more support for that kind of training, very personalized, localized, I think would make a huge difference across the city. And we continue to do that with [REDACTED] who is the aboriginal liaison officer, so I've started doing sessions like that with PDQ 15, which is in our neighborhood.

Q19: So, [REDACTED] is under PDQ 15?

R19: No. [REDACTED] works in the headquarters, now. He used to be with the 50, the metro, and that's when he started having connections with the indigenous community. But then, he was hired as the aboriginal liaison officer. He works throughout the city, and does the sensitization sessions, which are one technique that has proven to be successful to a degree.

So... we're done with the nice stuff! Some of the challenges we definitely see is that victim support is very much lacking in Montreal. I've had the pleasure to meet with the direction of CAVAC in Montreal on two or three occasions. Each time, we started with the same question: How many indigenous people are on your caseload? And the direction very honestly says: "I'm not sure, but it's not a lot, if there's any." So, CAVAC is a whole service who assists victims of crime. We know indigenous people are very much over represented within the criminal matter; it doesn't make sense that there's such a huge disconnect.

Q20: Ok, so there's no caseload...

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant



**CAVAC:**

R20: There's no caseload, in Montreal. Even though CAVAC works in a lot of communities where it's mostly indigenous communities, and they definitely have that experience, but in Montreal specifically, our CAVAC is not seeing that. And there are questions why. I think the first one is: those having most contacts with the police are our most vulnerable populations. Those are street involved and homeless indigenous people. CAVAC does not respond to people that are very vulnerable. If I'm at my house with my partner and we're having an argument, police will respond, and they will follow their protocol amongst domestic assault. And more often than not, they will do a CAVAC referral. Because this is a relationship, this is somebody that's situated well, we want to support them.

So, the challenge is... If there was the same situation, a couple arguing, but it happens on the streets, that is not looked at as a domestic situation. That's looked at as a fight on the street, there's no CAVAC referral, both parties are treated as aggressors, there's not that sensitivity built into the system. If you were to stop any officer right now, and ask what their protocols around domestic assaults are, [*snaps his fingers*] they would be immediate. It wasn't like that, maybe twenty years ago, but there's been enough training and enough development that there's an automatic reflex. "We want to support the people in this, we want to do a CAVAC referral, we want to have the best outcomes." But when they're seeing two indigenous people on the street, who may be in a domestic dispute, the reflex isn't that "this may be a domestic situation, let's support whoever needs the support." There's no CAVAC referral and, for that reason, the victim support is gone. And why is CAVAC funded? Because we know that victim support is very important to ensure that people maintain healthy relationship, maintain a healthy self, and it's something that's not provided to our more vulnerable population, who probably need it the most.

A big part of my position is to pick that up, so we started to offer victim support. We work with our indigenous therapists that understand the experience of indigenous people when it comes to healthy relationships. We're able to meet with somebody and provide that support, but we're not there when the incident happens. Sometimes, CAVAC is able to do accompaniment with police officers when something happens. It's just not happening with indigenous communities. Again, when we're talking about our vulnerable population, there's that lack of cultural sensitivity with officers responding not knowing cultures, customs, traditions of indigenous people, and just knowing... Maybe just going with that mindset of those negative stereotypes of indigenous people: alcoholics, prone to violence... And this is where, because the police officers don't have correct training...

We've seen models in other places in the world where all officers get *implied*... What's the name of that training? Where they all come in with the understanding that we're all biased. Just knowing that, and knowing that if you're responding this, this is why, can sometimes have really good outcomes in racially diverse communities. We don't do that training here in Montreal. Instead, the police are going there, and their training is "This is my warning signs, and this is why I'm going to react in this more aggressive manner." That's often when we see the negative relationship perpetuating between the indigenous communities and the police.

I think it's also very important that police understand that there is a poisoned relationship between police and indigenous communities. It was the federal government that created a legal framework for

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

residential schools, it was the churches that ran the residential schools, but it was the police that came to take the children away. Was it SPVM? No. Was it the SQ? In some situations, yes. Mostly, it was the RCMP, but police really have to realize that all police forces represent them. Going there with that understanding and knowing that, much like those traumas get passed from generation to generation, that distrust for the police gets passed from generation to generation. And there's a significant power imbalance between police and communities, and to recognize that... And maybe the onus to parading a healthy relationship, to lessening that bias, should be on those with more power. So, it should be the police who come in with the intention of being like: "We know the power dynamics are off." Much like the social services, the police have a very special relationship with indigenous peoples. For that reason, there should be training around what that special relationship means and how that plays out.

Q21: Have you been witness to situations involving the police?

R21: Yes, I've definitely seen officers come in and use what I would describe as excessive force in dealing with street involved and homeless indigenous people. So common that was almost not worthy. Fortunately, I haven't seen where somebody has gone so far as to have a... where there's been... I think in the community, it's normalized so much, they're like: "Oh yeah, I got a black eye from the police." Because that's just what everybody's interaction is, so it's not noteworthy. I think that in itself shows how poisoned that relationship is. I know if I was working with... Previously, I was working with a lot of newcomer groups. If there was a newcomer group, and somebody in that newcomer group was routinely getting black eyes from the police, there would be an outcry. But within indigenous communities, that's: "Well, that's just the way police are!" So even though this is very noteworthy excessive use of force happening, it's so commonplace that it's not exceptional.

Q22: People are resigned.

R22: People are resigned that this is just our relationship. So, I think there's maybe room there for training and understanding.

### **Justice:**

Q23: About justice? Any situation with the justice?

R23: The biggest situation, when we're talking specifically about indigenous people, is around the Gladue reporting. We know that mechanism is enshrined in Canadian law, it applies to Quebec just as much as Ontario, just as much as everywhere else we've seen, every other province and territory, but they're not used.

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

Q24: Do you know why?

R24: It's a long process. I've been told that, to do a good Gladue report, you may need a month or more. To do the social history and be able to present something that is meaningful. It's only used at sentencing, so it's not used previously to have a better understanding. The judge has to take into consideration the Gladue report at sentencing, but not before, when it might give the judge a better idea of why this situation is in front of him. There's just nobody trained in Quebec. I think it might change now but, at one point, I heard there were three Gladue reporters. Two or three Gladue reporters throughout the whole province. And we know indigenous peoples are very much over represented in the justice system, so that is a wholly inadequate number. And there's no funding to do a Gladue report.

There's very little funding, so you're asking somebody to come in with their expertise, who need to be trained to do this, but you're not able to find ways to compensate that long, lengthy process of developing those reports. I think that's probably one of the biggest sort of situation. We have mechanisms that are built, that are part of law... We've talked to lawyers, who had no idea what that was. Far too often, guilt is used as a technique. What I mean by that is, a lot of times somebody will have an offence and they might not be able to hire their own lawyer, so they have to go through legal aid. With legal aid, the lawyer comes in and this is the simplest choice: have you plead guilty to a lesser offence, then just get it over with, and the judge will probably be lenient. Which is often the case for the first, maybe even the second offence, but I think if indigenous people had better lawyers, better access to quality lawyers, they wouldn't have to plead guilty. And if a second or third offence came, because the judge looks at that whole body of the history of it, and if they're seeing patterns that... My non-indigenous friends, if they have conflict with the law, they're almost never pleading guilty, because of the consequences. For indigenous people, again, it's just too easy to say: "Let's plead guilty, let's get this over with." The legal aid lawyers know that it's the quickest route, and that's what they do.

Q25: Do you know a person that regrets that they plead guilty at the beginning, and told you that they were not well informed?

R25: Yes. I definitely can think of lots of examples. That's a very common theme. Especially when they sit down with a lawyer who doesn't do that. We work with a few lawyers that I do a lot of referrals to. [REDACTED] is one of them. She's not going to have a cookie-cutter approach to every case but I find that she's hesitant to plead guilty if there's a case to be made. When she sits down with the participant, she'll ask about prior history, and you can see those comments, like... It seems interesting that this person has so many guilty pleas when...

Somebody like her, with a legal background, like: "These are things that could have probably been brought in front of a court in a not guilty verdict, but it just seems like somebody didn't want to do the

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

work.” We’ve also worked with legal aid, our Community Legal Clinics, and they’ve given us that feedback time and time again. It’s far too simple for people to come up with... Be it something as small as tickets. Be it something as small as simple assault.

Q26: Do you have a few people that came in with tickets, here?

R26: Not as much. When I worked at PAQ, we worked with a very vulnerable population, and ticketing has always been a means that... you know, for behavior. But we work with a lot more families and community-based people so we’re not seeing as many people that are presenting as vulnerable, so maybe not getting the tickets.

Q27: Do you have people that come in saying: “I went with my legal aid... my lawyer doesn’t understand...”

R27: Yes, all the time. I don’t have a background in law: I have experienced going through the legal system with a few people. Far too often, I sit down and, even with my very cursory knowledge, I’m able to explain the legal system a lot better to the participant I’m accompanying than their lawyers. They may not have taken the time, and because it’s such a foreign, cold and bureaucratic process, a lot of times my participants go in there very scared. Not asking questions. It’s not comforting, it’s not... No matter what the offence, they feel they’re going to get the worst-case outcome.

Q28: Do you have other situations you would like to bring up?

**Santé:**

R28: Just maybe very generally around health. Very much the same thing as social services, that is the experience we get reported back: that it’s different between an accompanied indigenous person and not accompanied. So again, and maybe it’s because I’m loud... When I go in, I’ll announced to the reception, to the doctors, that my name is Wayne Robinson, that I work for Native Montreal, that I’m here to accompany this participant and make sure they get the best possible support. And we get a “ok!”... so they get the best possible support. But the same participant will go by themselves and access the service and come back, like: “That was horrible. I feel like they weren’t listening to me. I felt like they didn’t...” And again, 25 500 indigenous people: I cannot be at every hospital visit, I can’t be at every health visit. Really, what it comes down to is: we need to have that training, that understanding of that special relationship between indigenous peoples and the service providers that they’re accessing.

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Enquêteur

X  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Déclarant

Q29: Did you have to work as a translator, sometimes, with people, because they were not able to speak English or French?

R29: I have the same issue myself where I'm an anglophone, so I'm not doing linguistics translation. But I definitely can do a light translation of the terms and concepts that are being presented to us and do my best to translate them into layman's terms so that our people can understand.

But we've used other services. I have definitely worked with families that were not getting the service and the language they wanted, so we'll bring in another intervention worker from another team to accompany us and ensure that those languages are being met. We have a very diverse urban indigenous community with very diverse linguistic backgrounds. There's no "let's make all the services in English", because that not going to help everyone. French. It's really about understanding that, as first peoples of this land, there might need to be a special accommodation to ensure that services are provided in whatever their first language is. Because very often, it's not French or English.

Q30: Do you have other situations? Because for me, it seems complete.

R30: Yes, same for me.

X

Enquêteur

X

Déclarant