

**What is your experience of being a patient in Australia of long COVID and/or repeated COVID infections, particularly regarding diagnosis and treatment?:**

**What have the health, social, educational and economic impacts been for you, in relation to long COVID or repeated infection? Has there been an impact on your family or community?:**

Prior to the covid vaccination, I was happy, healthy, fit, independent and physically active. Like a lot of people, I suffered seasonal hay fever and asthma, but this controlled by prescribed medication. Never having any reactions to any vaccines in the past, the pandemic, trust/faith in our government and the federal medical advice, I booked into my GP to have the AstraZeneca vaccination by choice. The day prior to this appointment in April 2021, the Prime Minister of the day made the announcement that 'no person under 60 would be able to receive this AstraZeneca vaccine'. My GP in turn cancelled my appointment. I then spent 6 hours on the phone to book an appointment to attend one of the vaccination hubs. Choice was taken out of my hands.

My experience commenced within 24 hrs of receiving my first Pfizer vaccination in August 2021, getting all the advertised reactions plus more and debilitating, with an initial two weeks off work with a medical certificate.

After this initial time off, resumed work part-time under medical advice, but continued to struggle with debilitating symptoms. Accepting the symptoms as normal and being 'STRONGLY encouraged' by work, I received my second Pfizer vaccination in September 2021. Within 24 hrs I lost vision in my left eye and had left-hand facial paralysis, and this is where the nightmare begins.

I presented to the local emergency department and told by a nurse that '...I was having a migraine and to go home and rest... and ...the Dr on duty would not see me...'. Within the hr contacted an Optometrist and was provided an urgent appointment for several eye tests resulting no abnormalities but extremely concerned.

As I had a gut feeling, I commenced noting daily all the various symptoms. The symptoms are, but not limited to: vision loss, burning sensation in the eyes, partial facial paralysis, blurriness, light sensitive, headaches, feeling of electric shocks throughout the body, ringing in the ears, dramatic weight loss, dramatic hair loss, tingling & numbness, vomiting, unable to eat, itchy skin, skin rashes, swelling under the skin, brain fog, listening but not hearing, forgetfulness, aches and pains throughout the body including jaw & chest pain, tightness in chest, heart skipping beats, heart palpitations, blood pressure uncontrollable, internal/external body shaking, bloating, tiredness and exhaustion, shortness of breath, chesty, bronchial cough, laryngitis, fatigue, vertigo, lethargic, balance off, temperatures, unable to control body heat and mobility issues.

Whilst symptoms continued and struggling with everyday household tasks and work, I had to look after my mental health and can pretty much say I experienced every emotion under the sun.

On presenting to my GP and going through a list of symptoms, was provided a prescription for migraines. I requested referral to an Ophthalmologist of which was reluctantly given. Saw the Ophthalmologist and again told nothing to be abnormal.

Through to October 2021, due to the severity of the symptoms, continuing to work in any capacity became unsustainable and provided work, medical certificates of which continue today.

In January 2022, again after reluctant referral for an MRI on my last GP visit, had an MRI of the brain. The following morning was urgently requested to attend GP. The MRI showed a brain tumour. Even though in total shock, I thought I had an answer. The following morning again urgently requested to attend GP, was prescribed 1000mg/d of Keppra (anti-seizure medication – never had seizures). Reluctantly commenced taking and within about 10 minutes was comatose and this continued for 15 days with no follow-up until I saw a neurosurgeon. On visiting the neurosurgeon, advised that 'I had been mis-diagnosed and mis-information from GP and should never have been prescribed this dangerous medication... yes I do have a brain tumour, but it is totally calcified and potentially has been for decades and has nothing to do with the current symptoms and I do not require this medication but no idea how to ween off'. So now back to square one.

When you are continually told there is nothing wrong with you, this coming from all angles, work/home/family-friends/health professionals etc., but you have severe and debilitating symptoms, the mind starts to play mind games and I, probably like many others went to some very dark places. I sought the help from a psychologist who was not compatible. I then sought help from a psychiatrist who directed me to a self-help website. How are you meant to do this when you are having debilitating eye issues?

I saw my dentist with the jaw/mouth pain and advised 'I needed to have a molar extraction'. No x-ray, just an assumption. This did not happen. I then visited my Periodontist, who x-rayed and advised 'possible nerve damage with no intention to extract, requiring further investigations & monitoring'.

By this time symptoms were getting worse, and many more appeared. I continually visited my GP and continually requested referrals, continued to see specialists to work out what was happening. Reluctant to provide referrals to any specialist for that matter, I had to become very assertive. When the GP writes a sentence in referrals like 'I don't know why she needs this', it just affirmed I was being treated like a hypochondriac. Our medical system has a lot to be desired.

I persisted and on seeing an Immunologist in April 2022, had a rath of blood tests, an allergy prick test of 2 drops of Pfizer, and provided a temporary 3-month vaccination exemption. This was promising or so I thought! Within 4 hrs started to have reactions. My forearm blew-up with a tennis ball size lump and took over several days to disperse. It was like having a fire on my arm. Having taken pictures of this, provided to the Immunologist, and told 'there was nothing wrong'. Advised blood results 'nothing abnormal, I had not

contracted covid and my T-cell count was through the roof, and a further exemption would not be given’.

Mid-May 2022, after having the reaction to the prick test, my GP acknowledged that I was having a reaction to the vaccination, possibly an active ingredient of Pfizer (‘PEG’) but no idea as to what I should do apart from not having another mRNA vaccination.

Unfortunately, this the same reaction from several specialists, again told ‘nothing to be abnormal, there’s nothing wrong, it’s all in my head, and the vaccinations would not have caused the symptoms being experienced’. I persisted and saw further specialists including a Neurologist with again the same reaction.

During this time, my husband had emergency bowel surgery from a twisted bowel of which his surgeon advised ‘this highly likely from stress relating to what he was witnessing, watching me suffer, and not being able to do anything’. This is just not limited to the individual suffering from symptoms, it extends further to partners/family/pets/etc.

Mid-June 2022, I believe I had an anaphylaxis attack, and the only immediate relief was the Ventolin. After a period, I was able to breath normally. I did not attend the local ED as I felt it a waste of time only to be sent home again. This from previous experience.

Feeling abandoned from the onset, and my health as the priority, in moments of limited pain, I commenced researching FDA (USA) and CDC (UK) websites, as TGA (Aus.) has limited amount of available public information.

One of the active ingredients of Pfizer ‘PEG’ (and known by several other names). I found that this is an additive in pretty much everything and mostly listed as ‘natural’ on labelling (anything that has been processed or manufactured including for topical use – packaged food, sauces, condiments, vitamin supplements, moisturisers, eye drops, shampoos, soaps, laundry liquid etc, etc, etc. You need to have a science degree and a magnifying glass to just read labels with some products not listing the ingredients and directing you to their website).

I commenced eliminating this from my diet as much as possible, keeping to water only, whole skinless fresh fruit during the day (including high amount of vitamin C), whole vegetables & whole meat/poultry for dinner. 7 months on, I believe this has helped me considerably. The debilitation is now shorter in duration, some symptoms slowly dispersing whilst other new symptoms appearing. I have continued to have eye issues which were original symptoms and advised by the Optometrist that this in her opinion is ‘nerve damage’. What other damage has been caused?

As hard as it is, I changed my mind set (being regimented and in part a workaholic), to accept that I can only do what I can do, and to listen to my body – sleep when I need to sleep, move when I need to move, eat when I need to eat, and continue to walk 4kms every morning, mostly a slow-paced stroll. I know movement and exercise is one of the best medicines and believe you me, I’m trying to find the balance of not too much, but not too little and it’s a fine juggling act.

Submission by Gaye Walker - Inquiry into Long Covid and Repeated Infection

Over this whole period, still suffering multiple symptoms at times still debilitating, in August 2022, I lost partial vision in my right eye twice, with the Optometrist recognising the symptoms of Long Covid and referred me directly to a Neuro-Ophthalmologist.

Early October 2022, reluctantly presented to ED with chest pains, extremely high blood pressure, heart palpitations and skipping heart beats. This unfortunately got the same reaction, the Dr told me 'There's nothing wrong, it's all in your head and you should get on with life... and I (Dr) have completed a full neurological test (facial movements only) and you do not have a brain tumour', and then 'your GP needs to put you on blood pressure medication'. My husband was horrified after witnessing this and totally understood why I didn't present with possible anaphylaxis.

In early November 2022, visited the Neuro-Ophthalmologist, who again said, 'there was nothing wrong and there is not much available information on long covid' and prescribed an over-the-counter medication for migraines and referred me to a cardiologist.

I have not taken the medications prescribed as I felt it was only going to mask symptoms, and my understanding that once on some medications, there is no turning back. When medical appointments are mostly less than 10 minutes with no vitals taken but quick to hand out prescriptions, this is a red flag, not the answer nor right. What further symptoms could these medications cause? Its bad enough I had taken the Keppra and what did that cause? I have ridden this horrific roller coaster, changed my diet and mindset, and believed I am better for it, but symptoms continue.

The only positive to this whole Pfizer saga, is that from what I believed to be anaphylaxis, I no longer have any sign of hay fever or asthma and have not required any medication since.

I do not proclaim to have a medical or scientific background and in no way advocating what is working for me. I have had a lot of time to analyse what has been happening to me and this (the vaccination) has been in pretty much every part in my body. I have conducted research when not debilitated as it feels that I have been left to my own devices.

It's now 450+ days / 16 months of suffering (over 100 symptoms) and I'm still no closer to getting a diagnosis. I have been unable to work for over 12 months, lost a substantial income, and don't really know if I will ever return to work let alone have a job to go back too. My career, personal plans, life, dreams, and aspirations have been crushed, literally and figuratively. I have pretty much become useless. I have lost in excess of \$100,000 and paid out thousands so far on medical bills and still counting.

And... to my husband (the spouses/partners/carers) who has had to pick up the pieces whilst continuing to provide an income from his small freight business (we would be literally out on the street if not for this), run the household whilst watching on helplessly and accept that this 'Long Covid post-vaccination' (also known by several other names) could potentially be a long recovery and/or a more permanent thing, I take my hat off to you and feel guilty that I am now so dependant on you (and I'm sure those suffering do to theirs). I am unable to speak in relation to those suffering 'Long Covid post-covid' but suspect the same.

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At the end of the day, I believe the Pfizer vaccinations have caused, and is the root cause of all my symptoms, and I will continue to seek diagnoses to prove this. This has been both mentally, physically, and financially debilitating for both my husband and I.

**What specific actions would you like to be taken in relation to Long Covid and Repeated infection, that would positively impact the situations you have outlined above?:**

This committee is good progression. Much more airtime is needed, and I believe the recommendations of the committee should include:

- "To extend the timeframe for submissions" as this was not advertised and only found through research. I understand there are more than 74,000 other Australians that have reported severe symptoms to the TGA post-vaccination, this a vast difference to the 140+ submissions to this committee, and
- "To set up a royal commission into 'Long Covid post-Vaccination' & 'Long Covid post-Covid', widen the scope, and include advocates from both to be at the table", as those who have not suffered should not be making all the decisions. Our pain and suffering are real, and
- "Allow not only those who have suffered/are still suffering, but the family members who have had to pick up the pieces tell their stories", and
- "Consideration to a revamp to the Federal 'Long Covid post-vaccination' compensation scheme as the previous government made it so complex even the best lawyers are struggling with the complexity, and
- "Consideration to employing some of those who have suffered/are still suffering to the Long Covid Taskforce set up by the Federal Government' (our input would be valuable), and
- "Recommend the Federal Government temporarily cease use of all covid vaccines until the full extent of this problem is realised".

Our current government needs to take responsibility for those previous decisions made by the former government, support and properly compensate those suffering 'Long Covid post-Vaccination' and come clean with the Australian public, with the information they know. Risk versus reward is not an acceptable excuse. We who have/are suffering 'Long Covid post-vaccination' are not collateral damage and should not be treated in this way.

International information has been trickling out for the past few months showing the mRNA vaccinations are neither safe nor effective, censored reports and studies showing the experimental drugs cause harm, and we're finally seeing this data being allowed to come out in public domain. I have located a document that the current President of the USA unsealed, declassified, and made publicly available that Pfizer wanted kept secret, and had sealed for 75 years.

Why was Pfizer trying to hide this information?

Why did our previous government only list 2 reactions that are available for the 'Long Covid post-vaccination' compensation scheme when in fact Pfizer has listed over 1200? Legal

representation is required to apply for or challenge the compensation scheme, but before this can take place 'you need to get medically diagnosed'.

How many Australians are having the same problem with getting their symptoms diagnosed?

Why has there been so much push back from both the government and the medical professions in acknowledging that 'Long Covid post-Vaccination' & 'Long Covid post-Covid' is here, and here to stay, and can't be swept under the carpet?

This is not rocket science, you only need to watch what is happening around the world and we in Australia are not that far behind.

Why is the current Federal Health Minister really concerned about 'Long Covid'?

Has our current government analysed the health care claims database for Medicare?

Is the concern that a new "pandemic" of illness and death may well be emerging from the side effects that continue to be documented in steadily increasing numbers?

I understand the vaccine-induced "culprit" that is now receiving the focus of much research is the 'COVID virus fragment' known as the 'spike protein'. Its physiological impact appears to be doing far more harm than good (COVID antibody induction), and its manner of introduction appears to be fuelling its ongoing replication with a continuing presence inside the body for an indefinite length of time.

What toxic effects do 'spike proteins' do to the body?

I understand, researchers have since identified side effects/symptoms of the vaccinations could appear over 100 days after vaccination, a higher rate of serious adverse events in the vaccinated than the unvaccinated, and the FDA (USA) quietly released a study on 'Adverse Reactions to Pfizer vaccinations' approximately 14 months AFTER they knew there were problems.

Did our previous government know too, that there were problems?

Have Australians been deceived?

Unfortunately, an atmosphere of fear can paralyse people into believing what 'experts' and 'officials' tell them. How many people fell for the trap and sought to silence or mock the dissenters (many being vindicated now for daring to question or raise doubts about the consensus view)?

How many people lost their jobs because of the mandates and fear tactics?

Remember back when news channels were plastering wall-to-wall counts of infections, hospitalisations, and death statistics?

Where is the information now?

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We all know communication is the key, the medical fraternity in the first instance need to be advised and updated as a matter of urgency.

Why are there numerous Covid Clinics opening?

In recent times, I am to understand that Qld scientists are working on a possible immune vaccine that will assist in neutralising long covid post-vaccination symptoms. Please do not rush the trials, we do not need another problem.

I thank the now Federal Health Minister for setting this committee up and thank the committee for their time in reading my submission.

Regards

Gaye Walker

**I would like the Inquiry to contact me to discuss privacy and confidentiality options for my submission: No**