

## **Statement Outlining Vaccine Injury Circumstances**

On September 6th, 2021, I received my first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at the Belmont Vaccination Hub. Four days later, on September 10th, 2021, I began experiencing significant chest heaviness and difficulty breathing while watching my children by the pool. Initially, I took some Nurofen and tried to stay calm, attributing the symptoms to anxiety, as I have a history of anxiousness and was concerned I might be overreacting. However, after six days of progressively worsening, stabbing heart pains, I presented to John Hunter Hospital Emergency in Newcastle on September 16th, 2021.

At that time, there was minimal support and understanding for individuals experiencing vaccine-related injuries. Doctors faced additional pressures to downplay or avoid documenting potential vaccine side effects. At the hospital, blood tests and an ECG were conducted, both of which were clear. The attending doctor mentioned that while there could be inflammation around the heart, this was considered a normal post-vaccine reaction and advised me to continue taking Nurofen for the next 24 to 48 hours, expecting the symptoms to subside.

However, over the following days, the pain intensified. I struggled to breathe, experiencing excruciating pain that radiated through my back and ribcage, to the point where even light pressure on my ribs was unbearable. By this time, lying on my back or left side was impossible, and the only position that provided some relief was lying on my right side with a pillow supporting my arm. These symptoms have persisted to this day, albeit slightly less intense, three years later.

On September 19th, 2021, I returned to John Hunter Hospital Emergency. I was fortunate to be examined by a senior doctor who performed a bedside ultrasound and identified inflammation around my heart, suggesting a mild case of pericarditis. He explained this by drawing a diagram and indicated that the condition could last anywhere from 24 hours to 12 weeks. However, the official discharge papers did not reflect this assessment, and the doctor's name was not listed. I was instead advised by another doctor, Dr. Koshy Mathew, to proceed with my next vaccination and to continue taking Nurofen.

Over the next 24 hours, my symptoms worsened. Desperate for help but feeling dismissed by the hospital, I made a phone appointment with my GP, Dr. Natalia Carter, on September 21st, 2021. Alarmed by my condition, she directed me to Lake Macquarie Private Hospital for further assessment. Unfortunately, this visit was the most discouraging of all. Despite my severe symptoms, the attending emergency doctor, Dr. Mark Miller, was dismissive, claiming there was no way I could have pericarditis. Although blood tests and an ECG were clear, I insisted on an echocardiogram. The sonographer, who had already decided there was nothing wrong, conducted a brief, insufficient examination. I left feeling unheard and uncared for, once again advised to take Nurofen and proceed with my second vaccination.

I endured six more agonizing days at home, fully believing I was dying. I even began planning my funeral and recording messages for my children. On September 27th, 2021, my husband

assisted me back to the Belmont Vaccination Hub for my second vaccine dose. Within minutes of receiving the shot, the stabbing chest pains and heart palpitations returned with full force. By 2:30 a.m., unable to bear the pain, I returned to John Hunter Hospital, where Dr. Michael Giles saw me. After conducting another round of tests, Dr. Giles reassured me that the inflammation would subside but cautioned me against seeing a cardiologist before the 12-week mark.

Despite these reassurances, my symptoms persisted, and my condition continued to deteriorate. I eventually saw a cardiologist, Dr. Patrick Diu, on December 10th, 2021, exactly 12 weeks after my symptoms began. Dr. Diu diagnosed me with pericarditis and prescribed colchicine, which reduced the pain temporarily, but once the medication wore off, the pain returned.

In April 2022, I contracted COVID-19, which exacerbated my existing symptoms. The sharp stabbing pains intensified, and after consulting with Dr. Diu, I underwent a cardiac MRI with contrast in June 2022, confirming a diagnosis of myocarditis. Despite this diagnosis, the treatment plan remained the same.

In addition to the heart issues, I also began to display symptoms consistent with Postural Orthostatic Tachycardia Syndrome (POTS). Although these symptoms began earlier, it wasn't until February 7th, 2023, that I was formally diagnosed by cardiologist Dr. Touma. At that time, my tachycardia was uncontrollable, resulting in multiple hospitalizations.

Further complications arose in November 2023 when psoriasis, which had been present on my scalp since the first vaccination, worsened, and I was diagnosed with psoriatic arthritis. This condition now severely affects my feet, wrists, and elbows, and I currently rely on CAM walkers for mobility.

The symptoms and pain I have experienced since September 2021 have dramatically altered my life, leaving me unable to work or care for my family in the same way I did before. I continue to endure severe physical and emotional challenges from the harm caused by the COVID-19 vaccine.

This statement outlines the circumstances leading to my claim for compensation.