

PATIENT ADVOCACY

DRIVEN BY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Melissa Chalmers

A320 Captain (Commercial Airline Pilot)

PERSONAL HISTORY

- Flew for 25 wonderful years, healthy and very fit.
- Started experiencing facial numbness with cellphone use
- Moved to new dwelling next to a TV/radio tower and developed poor sleep quality
- After cell tower was built, MCS, situational tinnitus, nausea, joint pain, weight gain, memory loss, anomia, fatigue, involuntary muscle twitching and movements, heating sensations and shocking
- Another cell phone towers were put up over time and symptoms became very severe
- Disabled – could not do IADL (instrumental activities of daily living)

MEDICAL SUPPORT

- First doctor – supportive but suggested that the cell phone being the cause of this problem be kept quiet
- Specialist – supportive about the fact that this was related to EMFs
- MRI – nausea and half a day of vertigo
- Occupational Health Doctor 2010 – He knew exactly what condition I had ,and was treating 12 other patients with EHS. Avoidance and exercise were recommended. He said he would not advocate for me for fear of hurting his career.
- Another Occupational Health Doctor – who was involved in my disability paperwork had 4 other patients in his own practice with EHS
- Environmental Health Clinic – permanent disability secured.

SELF-INITIATED CARE

- Left totally alone to fend for myself
- Saw alternative medicine practitioners
- Moved to a low EMF location
- Large expenses
- Problems with Wi-Fi from neighbour and local cell tower construction
- Green Bank, WV visits over a period of 2 years, of which half of this period was a refugee situation

Green Bank, WV

- Radio-free zone for Radio Telescopes, doesn't protect people
- People with EHS from all over the world flock to this area
- People are sleeping in their cars, tents, cabins and some in houses
- World media has named them "Wireless Refugees"
- I noticed immediate symptom relief when entering the zone, with almost all symptoms disappearing in two days
- I had a perfectly good house to live in, and shouldn't have been forced to leave the country and live in a tent to be able to exist
- Canada has no radio-free zones and legally won't allow them

EHS CHALLENGES AND BURDEN OF ILLNESS

- Physical – chronic symptoms, physical disability, inability to avoid further injury
- Economic– unable to work or get financial assistance
- Social – isolation from friends, family and community
- Medical – lack of medical support, unable to physically be in hospital or clinics to get medical help due to wireless infrastructure in the buildings
- Emotional – day and night impossible struggle

Limited or No Access for EHS

- Hospitals
- Schools / Universities
- Abuse Shelters
- Nursing Homes
- Social Housing
- Driving a Car
- Public Transportation – Buses, Subways, Taxis
- Municipals and Government Buildings, Town Halls, MP and MPP Offices
- Doctor's Offices / Medical Clinics
- Community Centers
- Grocery Stores
- Air Travel
- Libraries
- Regular Services – haircut, theaters, restaurants
- Banks
- Dentist Offices
- Pharmacies

FINAL THOUGHTS

- Health Canada needs to start doing **DOING** something about this – implement the HESA recommendations and follow up with patients reporting illness
- EHS is not going away, in fact it's happening more often
- The key to fixing this problem is through the medical community – education, diagnosing, reporting
- The future is not promising unless Health Canada takes action!
- Thank you