

Health Canada's Crisis Line Exposes an Alarming Mindset

HEALTH CANADA'S 1-800 SUPPORT LINE was set up at the direction of the Minister's and Deputy Minister's offices to "provide information and advice to users of the product." (EM Power) The intent was to provide information about the risks of using this unapproved drug and to send people back to proven and effective medications accessible through their doctor.

The line became a crisis and complaint line with angry and agitated callers who were not informed of any risk to the product and who wanted neither counseling nor a referral back to drugs that didn't work nor a return to hospitalization. The record of this crisis line became a damning indictment of Health Canada's actions to deprive Canadians of access to a product which was obviously effective and which posed little or no risk to the public. In fact, it becomes rather obvious on review of this reluctantly disclosed document, that the only risk and crisis was created as a direct result of Health Canada's actions against a product which shows huge promise as a medical breakthrough. The record of the crisis line disclosed to the court is a 730 page document consisting primarily of hand written notes, taken by crisis -line employees, of the complaints and concerns of several hundred callers.

The Supplement is Safe and Effective

Not a single caller testified of any adverse effect of taking the supplement, although many enquired about the nature of the risk that Health Canada was claiming. Of course no answer concerning risk was given because Health Canada, to this day, has no scientifically backed information regarding any significant risk. In fact, the Office of Natural Health Products Directorate has approved the product as safe. So the "risk" callers were told about was a concocted lie/scare tactic which Health Canada could refer to in order to justify their actions.

Reading the entire transcript of the crisis line thus becomes a huge confirmation of the effectiveness of EMPowerPlus. The effectiveness of this product was a theme that ran through the entire document. For example:

"He spoke of how his wife who suffered from depression for 15 years wasn't benefiting from anti-depressants, however, since she has been on "Empowerplus" for two years, she has tremendously improved" pg 11

"has given me my life back" pg 20

"no other approach, including drugs and shock therapy, has worked" pg 20

"this supplement has made an enormous difference in the way I live and the quality I live" pg 23

Doctor's daughter is on the program "and it is successful". pg 60

"I spent 2 full years in bed ... and with the product I can now work and have an active life." pg 92

"suicidal since age 8 ... pays taxes ... works for 1st time" pg 157

"She has taken medication for the last 10 years and for the last 3 years she changed for Empowerplus and it has changed her life." pg 191

"My doctor promoted this product. It helps a lot of people" pg 380

"it's like a miracle turnaround" pg 382

"Started on EMPower this year – quality of life has improved incredibly" Pg 398

"Product has been life saving – son has stopped suicidal ideation" pg 430

"Recommended by the doctor and under his supervision" pg 461

"the product really made a difference in her life ... no other medication was working for her." pg 480

"prescribed by her psychiatrist ... according to the client this is the only thing that has worked for her" pg 496

"able to work now – could not before Empowerplus – it changed my whole life" pg 534

"antidepressants didn't work ... changed her life" pg 552

"was suicidal no longer" pg 592

"Her mother is a schizophrenic who has been using Empowerplus ... for a year. She is not in hospital burdening the Alberta Health Care system and she thinks that is wonderful." pg 615

"chronic immune disease. On the product for 3 years. Now really better. It has changed his life. Can now eat salt. Can do Phys. Ed. Mother has been able to work more outside and use less social support for handicapped children." pg 617

"husband had been on traditional antidepressants for 10 years and they did nothing for him. He was on this for 5 months and he is doing very well. Her son is diagnosed as bi-polar and is doing extremely well on this" pg 678

"Has 3 functioning children due to Empowerplus – they are bi-polar" pg 686

These and hundreds of letters sent to Health Canada and to the Minister's Office were ignored. Remember, dramatic turnarounds on these serious illnesses are seldom seen, even with the best of treatment. Why didn't Health Canada investigate the many evidences of effectiveness? Why didn't they ever try to contact the researchers to confirm such responses?

Health Canada Ignores Desperate Pleadings

Perhaps the biggest question that arises is: why did Health Canada ignore the desperate pleadings of hundreds of Canadians forced to beg for their lives to a government that paid no attention to the many warnings of harm that would ensue from their actions? Listen to a few of those which come forward even through the sanitization that occurred as workers approximated and summarized what were obvious, serious and desperate pleadings!

“He expressed concern towards his wife's risk of taking her life when she runs out of product.” pg 11

“we'll all crash and it will be on Health Canada's heads – terrible consequences” pg 20

“I am just in a panic state now, knowing that we can no longer have these supplements ...” pg 21

“I'd like to know what you're going to do about my possible suicide in a few weeks when I run out of the EMPowerplus” pg 21

“I require EM Power to live ... also feels as a death sentence has been given to her” pg 21

“Feels as though Canadian Gov. is giving her a death sentence and she feels as though Suicide would be the only way to go if product remains banned” pg 22

“Was severely suicidal before taking EM Power plus, and is now afraid for his life if the product is banned” pg 22

“My oldest daughter is 7 months pregnant, she has been suicidal before she took the EM POWER and we're afraid of what might happen if this was to be denied to her during her pregnancy, as well as the terrible side effects that comes with this (meds) that pregnant moms are given” pg 23

“Went off of it for 3 weeks and felt like committing suicide.” pg 44

“extremely upset and angry ... feels that Health Canada has put many lives of Canadians in danger.” pg 62

“Does not feel that she will be able to function without it” pg 102

“Caller is desperate and pleading with me to tell the minister to change her mind” pg 151

“My daughter 19 years old is really improved ... It’s a matter of life” pg 167

“now afraid of panic attack and suicide” pg 169

“This lady is yelling – I have product for one more week – Panic” pg 175

“She has 3 kids she has to take care of ... If government stops this, it will be the end of her life. It is a question of life or death and it’s extremely serious”pg 213

“terrified at the thought of not being able to use it” pg 221

“Government cannot stop this product because I will die” pg 245

“She’s crying a lot and says that it’s the only product that is making her feel alive” pg 250

“they have a 6 month old baby that needs her mother. At the moment they want to leave this country ... she has a hard time going to sleep at night and that this news really affected her.” pg 251

“she states that this will destroy her life. She was pleading to the minister (from a mother to a mother) crying and pleading, to please allow her to have access to the product” pg 254

“life and death situation for her ... has tried everything in the past” pg 281

“Feel betrayed – turned my life around ... Didn’t know that some people’s mission was to hurt people. Haven’t slept for two days ... Client crying ... We don’t need a crisis line, we need Empowerplus” pg 362

“Please tell the minister that she has to find a way because my daughter is going to kill herself.” pg 378

“I’m afraid, scared. Without this product I won’t be able to take care of my young children (please)” pg 380

“If I can’t have the product, he will become suicidal again” pg 402

“Now caller is very angry, will probably lose him (her son who is so improved on the supplement) in the next four months” pg 430

“Father called and is very angry because his only daughter needs that product ... and will be very suicidal if she doesn’t take this supplement. pg 474

“I’m very angry. This product is harmless. My daughter will be back to suicide ... You want to kill her ... It’s criminal ... (Mother crying – yelling)” pg 500

“My sister did improve a lot with that product and I’m afraid for her. Can you communicate my comments to the minister please.” pg 510

“She’s crying and yelling and wants some answer about the alternatives. She’s bi-polar and is taking Empowerplus for last 3 years.” pg 597

“Child has rare disease ... He is hugely improved. Desperate by end of June because his supply will run out. She does not want him to return to his previous level of functioning.” pg 611

“Son needs the supplement. He is suicidal without it.” pg 625

“My daughter ... I’m phoning on her behalf. I’m afraid. She has Empower for 2 more weeks” pg 637

“Donna called asking a an address to send a picture of her kids that will lose their mom ... Because no more Empowerplus!” pg 661

“Wants to be added to the list of people who would be devastated if Health Canada didn’t allow the sale of Empowerplus. It has made a big difference for her. I guess we will just have to move to the States.” pg 688

“she added that the title ‘honorable’ should not be associated with the minister’s name. She says she is no longer proud of her country, that this situation is inhumane and moronic ... she wanted to know how I could sleep at night knowing about this” pg 724

It is no wonder that Health Canada would not release this document to the court until ordered to do so, claiming it was “undiscoverable”. This is inhumane. This is chilling - what Health Canada put numerous citizens through hiding behind policy. What law would require this of its citizens in the first place?

The Questions that Beg to be Asked

What made a few Health Canada employees give out false information to the public claiming taking the product may be endangering health when there is no scientific validity to such a statement? How could they simply deceive the public into thinking the company was failing to comply with simple requirements and regulations when the court proceedings proved Health Canada knew that such requirements could never be met?

Why would Health Canada move to shut down a double-blind study at a University funded by a Provincial Government whose ethics board approved the study as well as the ethics board of the University when there was scientific evidence presented to them that the supplement was both safe and effective, and even more important, a promising medical breakthrough? This when there have been hundreds of studies done on products now classed as natural health products in the past without Health Canada's approval. No FDA approval is required on research into such products in the United States either.

What caused the then minister of health Anne McClellan to refuse to meet and to ignore hundreds of pleading letters of desperation sent to her office while the subsequent Health Minister, Mr. Pettigrew moved to make the product available to Canadian Citizens quickly? And what would cause Health Canada employee Joan Korol to refuse to take down false warnings against the EMPowerPlus supplement when the government standing committee on health had suggested that that would be most appropriate?

Is it not time for some oversight and some investigation into the actions of a few bureaucrats who have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars into the investigation and prosecution of a company for a maximum \$500 fine. It seems they should have been more appropriately encouraging research into what the court record now shows is incredibly beneficial to the lives of Canadians and to the Health Care System in Canada in general.

And finally, is it not time that every civil servant in Canada is told that regardless of circumstance, human life is more important than policy and that their first priority is to protect those lives! Court documents prove that, at every level of Health Canada's administration, they knew and understood that their actions were crushing the lives of innocent people. People who should have been able to rely on the government for help. The court was told that as a result of Health Canada's enforcement that two youth suicided, others were hospitalized, all the while, Health Canada ignored their pleadings for the help that they had been receiving from the supplement and its program.

If one feels there is no concern here, examine the following statement made by Health Canada agent Miles Brosseau under oath from the court transcript record. "So if you were sent a document ... showing that people were dying because of what Health Canada was doing ... you would just ignore that because it was not a policy or directive." Brosseau's answer – "Yes."