

AMPS National Tour with Dr Malhotra

Rado Faletič speech
Canberra, 30 May 2023

Thank you AMPS for hosting this national speaking tour with Dr Malhotra. And special thanks to Kara Potter, and all of the other vaccine-injured Australians who have spoken out in public about their injuries to draw attention to the issues that we all face.

This evening I'll share with you my journey as a vaccine-injured Australian and co-founder of COVERSE, Australia's peak organisation for Covid vaccine-injured people.

I have a PhD in science from The Australian National University, and for the past 18 years I've been a consultant supporting multinational science projects. I've never been pro- or anti-vaccine... I've always seen vaccines as a tool. I've taken many vaccines previously, and never reacted badly to any of them.

I was injured by Pfizer's Covid vaccine.

There is much discussion about Pfizer's mRNA and Lipid Nanoparticle vaccine technologies, and the adverse reactions people are experiencing from this product. This is not surprising given it was the most delivered vaccine in Australia (and almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of all doses given globally). But in our patient support groups, we have people injured in similar ways, at similar rates, by *every single* brand of Covid vaccine.

So, I got my first Pfizer shot in October 2021.

My very first symptom, within hours, was intense pain in the lymph nodes on my left side.

When I woke on the second day, my entire body went completely numb. That scared the heck out of me. From there, my list of symptoms grew. Many waned over the following weeks, but a few persisted.

I saw my doctor. Apparently, a lot of people had “extended” reactions. My doctor wasn’t concerned about mine though, and said it was safe to get my second shot. And, I said to myself: “*surely*, after the better part of a year, the Government would have flagged any truly serious safety concerns.”

What I now know, from data that we have collected at COVERSE, is that three quarters of people who have a nasty reaction end up with a worse reaction with their next shot.

Here are some other statistics that COVERSE has collected:

- The average length of time for these patients to see *any* improvement is well over 6 months.
- Women are just as likely to get heart inflammation from the Covid vaccines. In our patient support groups middle aged women account for 60% of these cases.
- Under the Government compensation program, the vast majority of patients (including myself) are ineligible to apply, and we do not have access to any other government support. And the majority of those who were mandated to get the shot are having their compo claims rejected.

Within hours of my second Pfizer shot in November ’21, all of my existing symptoms got much worse. In particular, I started developing sharp pains in my chest. Like I was being poked by needles. From the inside.

And... the brain fog became oppressive.

My family dropped me off at Calvary Hospital in Belconnen.

Blood tests. ECG. Covid test. All good. Except...

Elevated blood clotting. After much discussion, the doctors concluded there was no cause for concern, and that the clotting had nothing to do with the vaccine.

I asked them if they’d seen many people with issues after their Covid vaccinations. They said, and I quote, “we’ve had a steady stream of people every day”.

That was the moment I knew we were not being told the truth about the extent of serious reactions.

Over the following months I experienced many disabling and painful neurological, cardiac and systemic symptoms affecting my capacity to work and even just get through the day.

I could not walk for more than a few metres without feeling like my body was about to shut down. I was constantly bumping into things on my left-hand side.

I couldn't recall words. I could not engage in conversations for longer than two minutes before my brain could no longer process what was being said to me.

My emotions became unstable, fluctuating from the inability to feel any emotion, to extreme emotions like suicidal ideation and intense rage. And no, this was not due to the "stress" of my situation.

I went to hospital on several more occasions. Each time, tests were all "disgustingly normal".

On the last occasion, the concerned emergency doctor made a referral to the immunology department at Canberra Hospital. They rejected it, and said I should seek answers from the TGA.

Meanwhile, I had already submitted my own reports to the TGA, updating them with each new test and my symptom progression, and trying to get *any* response from them to help guide my treatment.

The TGA manifestly refused to provide any insights or undertake any investigation, even after they learnt that two of my close blood relatives had also been experiencing serious reactions to Covid vaccines. They told me that they don't actively follow-up reports of serious reactions.

I was gobsmacked. How can our drug regulator tell the Australian public that serious reactions are 'mild and short-lived', when they make no effort to verify that this is the case?

This is when I realised that nobody in Government is investigating or helping vaccine-injured Australians.

I wrote to my Federal MP on many occasions — the Member for Fenner, Andrew Leigh — asking for his help to get answers out of the TGA or help from Services Australia. The most I received from him was a perfunctory email, merely suggesting I make a complaint to the ombudsman. This, sadly, is more than most of us receive from our MPs. I also wrote to Rachel Stephen-Smith, the ACT Minister for Health, who forwarded my letter to Mark Butler (the Federal health minister), who forwarded my letter to the Department of Health, who wrote back with a copy-and-paste from press releases. Why have our elected representatives turned away from us? What are they afraid of?

My GP did what they could — referring me to specialists, ordering tests, prescribing any medications that we thought might be helpful — but told me they had no idea what was going on or how to help, because the Government had not shared any relevant diagnostic or treatment information with GPs.

This brings me to a very important point.

While it's true that an awfully large number of the vaccine-injured have been badly gaslight by medical professionals — on my third trip to emergency, as I was explaining my symptoms to the triage nurse I got to about number 15 and she said, “Finally! A real symptom.” — the far more insidious gaslighting is when patients get diagnosed with mental health disorders. Many of these patients later get tests that prove serious neurological, cardiac, or immune system problems.

However, doctors are not our main problem. As Dr Malhotra has explained, all doctors rely on the authority and expertise of agencies such as the TGA, to adjudicate the safety of *all* medical products and to provide timely and accurate information on the risks of those products. When those authorities fail — or even punish doctors who are loyal to their hippocratic oath in the wake of such failure — how can any of us make fully informed decisions?

In June 2022 Frank Chung at news.com.au published an interview with me, with the headline *‘Outright lying’: Australian scientist hits out at TGA after ‘life-changing’ Covid vaccine injury*.

Within minutes of that story hitting the web, I began getting phone calls and messages from hundreds and hundreds of other vaccine-injured Australians, all of

them previously thinking they were alone, and like me they were suffering ongoing and severe disabilities due to their Covid vaccinations.

Many of us asked the question, “What can we do to fix this and make sure it never happens again?”

That was the nexus for creating COVERSE.

It is extremely important for Covid vaccine-injured and bereaved Australians to speak for themselves.

These are *our* stories. They are not for other actors to use for their own purposes, to use our personal stories and photos *without our consent* for their own campaigns, and in doing so discredit the efforts of those of us who are genuinely injured and are trying to get recognition, treatment and support.

COVERSE collaborates with similar patient-led groups all around the world. This is a global problem. We’re filling the void to advocate and educate, to understand therapies, and connect researchers, a void that exists because *none* of our governments are fulfilling their obligations to care for their citizens affected by these vaccines.

One of the key efforts is to get mainstream coverage of the realities and facts around Covid vaccine harms, so that the medical profession and government can better support the patients who continue to suffer. Despite some success, we’ve had plenty of failures, with most media organisations still reluctant to broach this topic.

For example, in September last year a number of us were interviewed, along with some highly-regarded medical specialists, for an article that was commissioned by a well-respected publication. The article was written, it was ready to go to press. But at the last minute it was withheld, and it has still not seen the light of day. When asked for an explanation, the editor-in-chief’s excuse was that they “didn’t want to encourage anti-vaxxers”. The editor-in-chief... of the Medical Journal of Australia.

Since then, COVERSE has made a number of submissions to public inquiries. In particular, in our submission to Federal Parliament’s inquiry into Long Covid we

detail the breadth of medical, social and financial issues being faced by vaccine-injured Australians.

This document is now on Parliamentary record, for everyone to see.

The two key things that we ask for in this document are:

1. For the Australian Parliament to apologise for having abandoned the vaccine-injured and bereaved, and;
2. For the Government to dedicate *all* necessary resources to repairing this damage — by ensuring *all* affected Australians (not just those with conditions approved by the TGA) receive proper medical treatments to recover, and by compensating our loss of livelihood.

Thank you AMPS, and thanks to everyone who's turned up tonight.

Pfizer vaccine side effects: Scientist suffers 'long vax' neurological symptoms, brain fog | news.com.au — Australia's leading news site

An Australian scientist, left unable to work for eight months after a debilitating neurological reaction he blames on the Covid shot, has likened the treatment of people suffering vaccine injuries to that of returning veterans with health issues after the Vietnam War.

Dr Rado Faletic has slammed the Therapeutic Goods Administration's (TGA) adverse event reporting process, saying the medicines regulator tasked with vaccine safety surveillance was "simply uninterested" in investigating his symptoms despite submitting multiple reports.

"I'm similar to thousands of Aussies. After the vaccine I had a huge constellation of symptoms from head to toe," the 46-year-old said, describing it as similar to "mutant long Covid".

"The worst has been an oppressive brain fog. I've had headaches, chest pains, abdominal pains, unbelievable muscle twitching, issues focusing my vision. Basically I've been unable to work for eight months. I'm only now just starting to feel a little bit normal. This is not a mild side effect – this has been life-changing."

Dr Faletic said doctors and specialists were unable to find anything obviously wrong with him.

"You go to the hospital, they take your blood, do an echocardiogram or X-ray or MRI and don't find anything," he said. "They say, 'Well you look fine, go home and rest.'"

He added, "I don't necessarily blame the doctors. The problem is there hasn't been a test to find out what's wrong. I know some people are getting misdiagnosed with anxiety or functional neurological disorder – that's not what's going on. It's a physical injury."



Rado

Dr Faletic, who earned his PhD in hypersonic technology from the ANU and now runs an international research consulting firm based in Canberra, says his faith in the scientific and medical community has been badly shaken by his experience.

He received his first Pfizer dose on October 19 last year and his second on November 9. He had a bad reaction to both "within hours", but says the second was "dramatically off the charts".

"I waited a little while [to take the vaccine] – I work with technology and

have a science background, so I understood that with a new product, new technology, there could be some things we don't know about," he said.

"I thought, enough time has passed, surely our government would have flagged any reactions of concern. I took it and all this stuff happened to me. It's not a matter of it being a coincidence – it all happened within hours of the shots. Then I thought, surely the government would be interested in what's happened to me? Nope."

Dr Faletic says it soon became clear to him that the TGA wasn't interested.

"I've done 50 rounds with the TGA on this," he said.

"They've said, 'We can find no safety signals,' which I think is disingenuous if not outright lying. In my small personal circle I know over a dozen people with different long vax problems, [ranging from] ongoing headaches, memory problems or brain fog to some people who were basically bedridden for months."

When he went searching for answers, he found "hundreds of people" in online groups who had experienced similar symptoms and submitted reports themselves.

"The TGA still claims there is nothing to see," he said.

"We are being treated with the same type of derision and condescension as Vietnam vets when they came back damaged. The government doesn't want to acknowledge us, people in the community look down on us. There are a lot of parallels."

In the 1970s, Australian troops who had returned from Vietnam began to experience high incidences of cancer and other illnesses, with the government initially denying exposure to Agent Orange and other chemicals sprayed by the US military was to blame.

While health regulators and drug manufacturers including Pfizer have previously denied any causal link between the vaccines and neurological symptoms, the tide appears to be slowly turning as a growing number of experts call for more investigation.

Earlier this year, Sydney woman [Daniella Lenarczyk](#), 34, spoke out about her persistent symptoms that included migraines, tinnitus, neck pain and numbness in her arm.

In the US, the National Institutes of Health conducted a small [observational study](#) last year of patients who reported neurological problems within one month of Covid vaccination, including pins and needles in the face or limb, orthostasis – sudden decrease in blood pressure when standing or sitting – heat intolerance and palpitation.

That paper, currently in preprint, concluded that “a variety of neuropathic symptoms may manifest after SARS-CoV-2 vaccinations and in some patients might be an immune-mediated process”.

“There doesn’t seem to be a majority theory,” Dr Faletic said.

“Whilst we’ve all been damaged in the same way, our cluster of symptoms vary from person to person.”

In a statement, the TGA said it “monitors the safety of Covid-19 vaccines using information from a variety of sources, including analysis of adverse event reports submitted to the TGA, emerging published literature, worldwide safety data submitted by vaccine sponsors and information shared by international regulators”.

“If the TGA identifies a safety concern it will take regulatory action to address the safety issue and promptly provide information to the public,” a spokeswoman said.

“The recognised adverse effects of Covid-19 vaccines are included in the

approved Product Information (PI). These are updated as new safety information is identified. To date, the TGA has undertaken 26 actions with the sponsors to include new safety information in the PIs for Covid-19 vaccines."

Those have included the addition of hypoaesthesia (reduced sense of touch or numbness) and paraesthesia (an unusual feeling in the skin, such as a tingling or crawling sensation) to the PIs for Comirnaty (Pfizer) and Vaxzevria (AstraZeneca).

Handful of injury claims approved

Meanwhile, new figures obtained by news.com.au reveal the federal government's vaccine injury compensation scheme has approved just 16 payouts in six months of operation.

The Covid-19 vaccine claims scheme allows people to claim a one-off payment ranging from \$1000 to \$20,000 for lost wages or other expenses if they suffer a bad reaction, and in cases of death the family may be able to claim [funeral costs](#).

But the scheme has been criticised by legal experts and victims as [overly complex](#) and narrowly targeted towards a very limited number of officially recognised adverse effects.

Services Australia confirmed it had received 2225 applications as of June 2. Of these just 16 have been approved, 49 have been withdrawn and 671 are "waiting further information from applicants".

"The assessment process can be complex, and claims may also be reviewed independently by medical and other appropriately qualified experts," a spokesman said.

"In many cases, Services Australia has had to seek additional information from applicants in order to further progress consideration of their

application. In other cases, applications have also been withdrawn. If found eligible, applicants are given up to six months to accept an offer of compensation, therefore finalisation of claims may also take some time."

Services Australia declined to provide any data on the amounts of payouts or types of claims, citing privacy concerns due to the small number involved.

According to the TGA's most recent [safety update](#), there have been 129,995 total adverse event reports from 59.4 million vaccine doses administered to June 5.

Eleven deaths have been ruled as likely linked to vaccination, all after AstraZeneca.

No deaths have been officially linked to Pfizer in Australia from around 41 million doses administered.

In New Zealand, [three deaths](#) have been ruled as likely due to vaccine-induced myocarditis after Pfizer, from around 11 million doses.

Last month, the family of one of the 11 Australians who died after receiving AstraZeneca spoke out for the first time.

Victorian woman Robyn, a "fit and healthy" 77-year-old, died in September last year from Guillain-Barre syndrome.

Speaking to [ABC Radio](#), her children said while they still supported Covid vaccination, they felt let down by the lack of government support.

They said they believed they were entitled to a lump-sum payment of \$70,680 plus funeral expenses, but were critical about the complexity of the application process.

Her son Ross said reading through the vaccine claims policy, it felt callous.

"It's a policy that's designed to protect medical professionals from legal repercussions if something happens, like to my mother," he said.

"My understanding is that it is to facilitate the actual vaccine rollout, so the doctors aren't scared to administer vaccines. But for people who have suffered from the side effects, it feels like we're just an afterthought to that."

Dr Faletic said he had also looked over the scheme carefully and "it's absolutely clear they've written it to not include people like me".

"From a philosophical point of view we had these massive, broad, sweeping economic sanctions on all of us – lockdowns, travel shutdown – all done because someone may transmit Covid, the precautionary principle," he said.

"But when it's these vaccines it's the exact opposite – you have to prove every single thing."

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