

Revelations from Expert Mercury Report

1. Mercury poisoning in Grassy Narrows is a fact

REPORT: "There is no doubt that at these levels of exposure many persons were suffering from mercury-related neurologic disorders." [Expert Report, part 2, p.7]

NDP: "Canada has yet to acknowledge a single case of Minamata disease despite acknowledging the waterway that fed these first nations communities is polluted..." [NDP MP Carol Hughes, Hansard, Oct. 31, 2012]

2. The problem is ongoing.

REPORT: "Dr. Harada's follow-up study indicates that there is probably still a problem due to previous mercury exposure." [Expert Report, part 2, p. 7]

"Some individuals may still have high exposure." [Expert Report, part 2, p.7]

"Today there is a wide consensus that at even at low levels of mercury, mercury can affect children's intellectual and motor development." [Expert Report, part 1, p.19]

GOV: "This is one of those projects that we had reviewed and determined was safe."
(Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (Minister of Health, CPC) Hansard April 12, 2010)

GOV: "In fact, that river has gone under a tremendous transformation with the cleanup from all levels of government... There is great fishing there now and people are eating that fish. It is a wonderful place." (Greg Rickford, PCP, Hansard June 2, 2010)

MCGUINITY: "What we do have is a heavy responsibility to take a good, long, hard look at this new report and find out exactly what the story is." (Premier McGuinty, April 6, 2010, Toronto Star, referring to a report by Dr. Harada)

3. Mercury survivors are not receiving adequate medical care.

REPORT: "We also want to highlight the urgent need to improve the general health of these two communities as the health status of the participants was clearly poor." [Expert Report, part 2, p.8]

"It is paramount that members of the two communities are receiving the necessary medical care and

support. In contrast, residents in Minamata, Japan enjoy superb health care from neurologists and therapists even [if] they had not been classified as victims of Minamata Disease." [Expert Report, part 2, p.8]

McGuinty: "The health of all Ontarians is very important to our government, and my colleagues and I understand the challenges facing members of Grassy Narrows First Nation. (Premier McGuinty, email to concerned member of the public, July 24, 2012)

4. Mercury survivors are being denied compensation.

REPORT: "Among the 60 participants diagnosed with Minamata Disease [by Dr. Harada], 21 were acknowledged and 39 were not acknowledged by the [Mercury Disability Board]." (Expert Report, part 2, p. 6)

"The approach used by the Mercury Disability Board to assess whether or not an applicant has signs or symptoms consistent with mercury poisoning was designed based on the state of science and knowledge of the impact of mercury on human health in the 1980s." (Expert Report Intent, p.1)

"the Japanese government is revising their definition of Minamata Disease victims to be more inclusive and a new round of compensation is expected to release in 2011."(Expert Report, part 2, p.7)

GOV: "A spokesman for Ontario's aboriginal affairs minister Chris Bentley said the province hasn't had time to read the report yet. Scott Cavan noted the provincial and federal governments are still providing benefits for 'eligible people' under the 1985 Settlement Agreement. (Globe and Mail, April 7, 2010, referring to a report by Dr. Harada)

5. The situation has not been adequately monitored.

REPORT: "many of the health complaints from the affected population have not been properly diagnosed and documented." (Expert Report, part 1, p.27)

"there should have been extensive examinations and follow-up of these communities from [the 1970's] forward, and assistance with respect to health and nutrition." (Expert Report, part 2, p.7)

Dr. Harada's follow-up study shows the "need for a comprehensive epidemiologic study that would include all of the known outcomes of mercury exposure (including cardiovascular disease)." (Expert Report, part 2, p.8)

EXPERT REPORT REFERENCE

PART 1: A Review of Current Understanding of Mercury Poisoning – September 21, 2009. Laurie Chan Ph.D., and Donna Mergler, Ph.D.

PART 2: Opinions on Dr. Masazumi Harada's studies in Ontario based on articles provided by the Mercury Disability Board – October 29, 2009 and updated September 25, 2010. Laurie Chan Ph.D., and Donna Mergler Ph.D.