

The Post Millennial

Arresting hockey players harms public health



John Carpay

A video showing Calgary Police arresting a young man for playing hockey outside with his friends on a beautiful winter day tells us exactly and specifically how lockdown measures are bad for public health.

Two foul-mouthed police officers tackle a young man to the ground because he dared to ask them what was wrong with playing hockey outside. The police provide no intelligent response to his question, instead referencing "public health order" and threatening to taser him. The young man was neither armed nor violent, yet one of the officers smashes her knee into

the side of his leg, with obvious intent to inflict pain on him, in order to force him to the ground.

This is what "public health" looks like in Canada today. Our chief medical officers want us indoors, inactive, isolated from our friends, and watching a computer screen, all of which coincides with the consumption of more alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs. Yes, I suppose hockey players could all start watching aerobics videos in their basements, but let's get real.

If our chief medical officers actually cared about public health, they would be familiar with the abundant scientific literature telling us that

loneliness is bad for your health; isolation is bad for your health; isolation facilitates abuse; contact via zoom and skype are insufficient to sustain healthy relationships; excessive alcohol consumption is bad for your health; staying indoors is bad for your health; lack of exercise is bad for your health; poverty is bad for your health; depression is bad for your health; anxiety is bad for your health; delayed cancer diagnosis is bad for your health; lack of hugs and other physical contact is bad for your health.

If our chief medical officers understood that good health entails more than simply avoiding one virus that poses no

threat to 90 percent of Canadians, they would be familiar with the scientific literature that tells us that singing is good for your health; socializing is good for your health; spending in-person time with friends is good for your health; playing team sports is good for your health; watching a live performance is good for your health; watching sports with other people is good for your health.

These so-called “experts” are disregarding medical science. All they know about is one virus, and they assume – without evidence – that lockdown harms are not worth examining. I know this to be true because I wrote to all of Canada’s provincial health ministers and chief medical officers in September, inquiring about deaths and other harms resulting from these “experts” cancelling over 200,000 medically necessary surgeries and delaying over 500,000 medically necessary MRIs and CT scans.

I asked these medical experts some simple and straight-forward questions like: “How many scheduled surgeries, physician consultations, diagnostic imaging procedures, blood tests, and surgeries were cancelled and postponed? What types of surgeries were postponed or canceled? How many of each type? Of those patients whose aforementioned medical procedures were postponed or canceled, how many have died?

Of these, how many would not have died if their medical procedure had not been canceled? Of those patients whose medical procedures were postponed or canceled but who did not die, how many suffered worsening conditions? Of those suffering worsening conditions, how many have suffered permanent damage to their health?”

The responses received thus far from the Yukon, British Columbia, Manitoba, and Newfoundland do not provide any specific or clear answers about harm to patients. Other provinces haven’t bothered to respond at all. This suggests that our politicians and chief medical officers are making no effort to obtain this vital information (more than eight months after cancelling surgeries), or that they have obtained this info but refuse to share it with the public.

Of course, one could argue that these people have better things to do with their time than answer letters, but this misses the point entirely. Politicians and Chief Medical Officers cancelled hundreds of thousands of medically necessary surgeries, MRIs and CT scans, but are giving no serious thought to how they have harmed hundreds of thousands of Canadians. If these “experts” possessed compassion, love for truth, and genuine concern for public health, they would be doing an honest

analysis of lockdown harms and posting that information on their websites. They could then legitimately refrain from answering letters, and instead, point to publicly available information about lockdown harms.

In fact, the Charter requires both elected politicians and unelected health officials to demonstrate, with evidence, that their lockdowns are actually producing more good than harm. Only then will they be able to justify the violations of our Charter freedoms to spend time with friends, sing in church, protest peacefully, play team sports, and celebrate Christmas with grandparents.

The failure of our politicians and chief medical officers to investigate the harms they have inflicted on millions of Canadians shows that they really don’t care about public health. The arrest of a young man for playing hockey outside with his friends further confirms this.

Lawyer John Carpay is president of the Justice Centre for Constitutional Freedoms (jccf.ca), which has commenced court actions against Alberta and Manitoba to end the lockdowns.