Ontario Nurse Faces Disciplinary Hearings for the Crime of Advocating for Patient Well-being

Registered practical nurse Sarah Choujounian faces regulatory punishment after speaking up about the harms COVID-19-related policies were having on residents in long-term care.

By Tamara Ugolini
Global Research, March 22, 2023
Rebel News 16 March 2023

Region: Canada
Theme: Law and Justice

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Registered practical nurse and single mother Sarah Choujounian has been terminated from her position and faces regulatory investigation and discipline for the crime of upholding her oath to advocate on behalf of her patients.

Choujounian was working in long-term care when she began denouncing the unethical and dehumanizing ways COVID-19 lockdowns were harming the elderly that she was supporting.

Her regulator, The College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) has since launched an investigation against her which has now transpired into disciplinary action.

> Interested members of the public need to email HearingsAdministrationGroup@cnomail.org for the link to the livestream. They should reference that they are interested in observing the Discipline Hearing which begins tomorrow in CNO and S.A. Choujounian-Abulu.
>
> Again, thank you⬜ pic.twitter.com/J60AJt4azR

"There are twelve allegations against me," says Choujounian. "They are coming after me saying that I misinform the public and how dangerous it is that I went against what [the regulator] says."

The College of Nurses of Ontario expects its members to support public health measures and be a "role model" for "directives that keep patients and the public safe," according to a [December 2020 statement](#).

The same statement says that "handwashing, masking, social distancing and vaccinations are effective strategies to prevent the spread of COVID-19," which appears to ignore the [real-world data](#) showing that COVID-19 vaccination does not prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"I was chief steward of the union and I was trying to be the voice of the people. I was shut down very fast," details Choujounian. She continues to describe horrific accounts of isolation and forced medication on the residents she cared for during the initial COVID response in early 2020 when residents were locked in their rooms and family members were barred from entry to provide care and support.

"A lot of residents were failing to thrive," she says, and "residents who weren't listening [to isolation orders] were locked in their rooms and sedated. Some walkers were taken away. They were dying alone. It felt so disgusting."

Choujounian was fired when [she spoke up about this horrific treatment](#).

Choujounian thought more people would come forward to denounce the harms COVID policies were having on the public after she founded Nurses Against Lockdowns which eventually turned into Canadian Frontline Nurses with ousted pediatric nurse Kristen Nagle.

But that didn't happen. "Even up until today, nurses are scared to speak up," she says.

This is par for the course when your regulatory body makes an example out of its members with intimidating investigations and silencing discipline.

> The College of Nurses claims that too many people reached out 2 get the links 2 my disciplinary hearing which made their system crash & they couldn't respond 2 the demand
>
> Everything should be resolved by now, if you haven't gotten a reply, call & demand it at (416)928-0900
>
> — Sarah Choujounian (@SarahChoujounia) [March 14, 2023](#)

Both Choujounian and Nagle have a [pending lawsuit against the Canadian Nurses Association](#) alleging defamation when they were referred to as domestic terrorists and anti-vaxxers for [speaking at a health summit](#) blocks away from [Capitol Hill](#) in Washington, D.C. on January 6.

Choujounian says that the media was subsequently weaponized against them after they received death threats and RCMP visits to their homes.

With several days of hearing left, Choujounian says that they don't expect to win at the CNO level.

"It's nurses from [the CNO] council representing the jury. So they won't go against the college," she logically explains. "Everything that we bring forward [in terms of evidence and experts] will be used for the appeal that we plan on doing afterward."

"If I have to, I'll go all the way up to the Supreme Court because I believe that I did exactly what I was told to do in nursing school. The first thing that we learn is the [Code of Ethics](#) and how if the medical industry turns against the people, it's our job to 'agitate and advocate' for what is best for our communities so I'm being punished when I feel like I should be getting a medal."

Meanwhile, residents are suffering from the [negative effects of severe understaffing](#) in the healthcare system, namely long-term care.

Choujounian is raising fees for her ongoing legal challenges at [Canadian Frontline Nurses](#) website.

Since her termination, Choujounian sold her home and has begun a mental health support program called [Lighting Up Dark Corners](#).

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Featured image is a screenshot from the Twitter video

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