

Adjournment from 10.16 am to 11.02 am

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CHAIR: Mr Mount.

MR MOUNT: Thank you Commissioners for your patience. Mr Molloy will take the evidence of the next witness.

CHAIR: Morning, Mr Molloy.

MR MOLLOY: Madam Chair, Commissioners and everyone here, tēnā koutou katoa. Ko Andrew Molloy tēnei and Counsel Assist ahau. Andrew Molloy is who I am and I am here to assist with the evidence of Ms Joan Bellingham who appears before you in the evidence box. Her preference, Madam Chair, is to be addressed by her first name.

CHAIR: Thank you very much. Tēnā koe, Mr Molloy.

JOAN BELLINGHAM

CHAIR: Good morning.

A. Good morning.

Q. Thank you for coming. Just before we begin, can I ask you to take the affirmation please?

A. Yes.

Q. Thank you. Do you solemnly sincerely and truly declare and affirm that the evidence that you will give before this Commission will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

A. I do.

Q. Thank you. Thank you Mr Molloy.

QUESTIONING BY MR MOLLOY:

Q. Ms Bellingham, we have people here who are transcribing what's going to be said and interpreting it and they are almost superhuman but not quite, so from time to time we may all need to be reminded just to pause and allow them to catch up. If we need to do that please don't be alarmed, it's just for that purely practical reason. I think you've got a statement in front of you that you brought with you of your evidence.

A. I have, yes.

Q. And it was prepared way back a million years ago in February of 2020?

A. That's right.

Q. Would you like to confirm that the evidence is yours and it's your statement?

A. It is, yes, I do.

Q. Why don't you take up from the beginning and give us your account?

A. Certainly. "My name is Joan Bellingham. I was born in 1952 and I'm 68 years old. I was born in Christchurch St George's Hospital and have been based in Christchurch all my life.

1 I would describe my family as a very close-knit family with a history in
2 healthcare. Both my mother and grandmother were nurses. My sister was also a nurse at
3 Princess Margaret Hospital in Christchurch but is now retired.

4 In this statement, I wish to talk about what happened to me while I was training at
5 Burwood Hospital and the abuse I suffered as a patient at Princess Margaret Hospital.
6 I also want to talk about the long-term effects on me and my experience in seeking redress
7 for what happened. The uncertainty associated with seeking redress was almost as bad as
8 the original abuse. My hope is that no-one has to go through what I went through.

9 I also want to acknowledge my friend Margaret for being a real support and
10 strength for me on many years. So much of what I've gone through would not have been
11 possible without her by my side. Unfortunately, she wasn't able to come with me today as
12 her partner had a serious car accident. But I have my very dear friend Marg who is here
13 today with me and she is also a wonderful support.

14 When I was 13, I attended Cashmere High School in Christchurch. When
15 I finished high school at approximately 18 years of age I left home to train to be a nurse at
16 Burwood Hospital. I commenced training on April 6, 1970. I always wanted to be a nurse
17 and always thought that was my calling in life.

18 At Burwood I was enrolled in a nursing course that was meant to take three years.
19 I remained a student at Burwood for several months before I was admitted to Princess
20 Margaret Hospital. I was happy at Burwood Hospital to start with. I loved my nursing and
21 I had lots of friends. We used to go out and socialise, which was sometimes frowned upon
22 with our training staff.

23 Many of the things that are socially acceptable now were not in the 70s. Sexuality
24 wasn't often talked about publicly. I often myself have always been pretty open about my
25 sexuality. I've been gay for as long as I can remember. I never saw it as something that
26 I needed to hide away.

27 While I was at Burwood, word got around that I was gay. I was constantly picked
28 on, especially by training staff at Burwood. The tutor, in particular, really took offence to
29 me being gay. She constantly made snide remarks about it. I recall one day, in particular,
30 she stared straight at me and told me that homosexuality was so wrong. It was the first time
31 I'd experienced prejudice so openly and directly. She would write comments on my grade
32 papers saying that, 'If you thought you were going to be a nurse you're wrong'. I can
33 remember feeling terribly ashamed.

34 As the months passed by my time at Burwood became more and more difficult. I

1 believe to the staff I was perceived as not conforming. At one stage, I came into class late
2 at 10 am, which raised eyebrows.

3 Things came to a head on one occasion accused by the same tutor of stealing drugs
4 off a trolley. This was totally false. It was after this incident that things really escalated. I
5 was told that I needed treatment and was taken to Princess Margaret Hospital that same
6 day. I didn't have my clothes or anything with me. There was no choice in the matter. I
7 was just told that I was being admitted to Princess Margaret Hospital.

8 I didn't realise it at the time, but I'd spend the next 12 or so there as a patient and
9 would never get to complete my nursing training. I can remember being driven to a
10 psychiatric ward, I was admitted on or about 21 December 1970. I cannot myself recall the
11 exact dates, but I understood I was discharged on 8 January 1971.

12 **Q.** Joan, can I just ask you to pause there. You were about 18 or 19 years old at that time, is
13 that right?

14 **A.** Yes, yes.

15 **Q.** Thank you, please continue.

16 **A.** During this short period, all I remember is that I was terrified and told them that this was a
17 mistake, but they wouldn't listen. They gave me drugs to quieten me down. I recall my
18 mother also being deeply anxious I was in hospital and wanted to know why I needed to be
19 there. But you didn't question the doctor's authority during those times. They were like
20 gods. They thought I might have a neurotic personality disorder. The worst part is that
21 I never felt like I was given a genuine choice or that the doctor was listening to me.

22 When I was discharged, I would try and function as normal. I would stay with my
23 parents. I cannot remember much of what would happen after I was discharged.

24 I would be in and out of hospital for the next 15 years. Sometimes it would be for
25 short periods of time, maybe a week or so. For example, I was admitted again from 23
26 April 1971 to 4 May 1971, then again from 14 May to 17 May 1971. All up I was admitted
27 24 separate times to Princess Margaret from 21 December 1970 to 28 June 1982. I became
28 so used to the hospital it became part of me. When they told me to go home sometimes
29 I feel like I didn't want to go. By the end of my time as a patient, I had become totally
30 institutionalised.

31 As the frequencies of visits increased, time blurred and I felt like I had no will to
32 live. I made numerous complaints to the doctors about this as I believe this was due to the
33 antipsychotic medication I was constantly being given. The amount of medication was
34 astounding. They never explained what it was or what it was for. They also never talked

1 about the side effects. I was just told to take it.

2 The medication was also excessive. For example, my medical notes say that on 31
3 May 1977 I had six micromoles per litre of chlorpromazine in my blood when the
4 therapeutic range was 1.6 to 2.2 micromoles per litre.

5 They also performed electroconvulsive therapy on me. I believe this was over 200
6 times during the course of the 12 years. A review of my medical notes indicate that I was
7 prescribed ECT daily between 21 to 31 December 1973, on the 2nd, the 4th, the 9th, the
8 11th, the 15th, the 18th, the 22nd, the 24th and the 26th of January 1974. Then on the 1st,
9 the 5th, the 8th, the 12th, the 15th, the 19th and the 26th of February, the 29th and the 30th
10 and the 31st of July. Then again on the 1st, the 7th and the 9th of August 1974. On several
11 occasions in or about June 1976 the 2nd, the 6th, to the 10th, the 12th, the 19th and the 20th
12 of July 1976. Then again on the 23rd, the 25th, the 26th and the 27th and on other days in
13 April 1977. Then again on the 2nd, the 4th, the 5th, the 6th, the 8th, the 17th, the 19th, the
14 20th, the 21st, the 24th and the 27th and 30th of May. And then again on the 2nd, the 7th,
15 the 9th, the 21st, the 24th, the 27th and the 30th of June 1977. Then again on the 18th, the
16 19th, the 20th, and 25th of April 1979, the 19th, the 21st, the 23rd and the 28th of July and
17 the 2nd of August 1982. And I believe on several other occasions. A letter from the house
18 physician dated 18 January 1979 said that I had 100 doses of ECT since April 1977".

19 **Q.** Can I ask you to pause there. I think in your statement it says 18th of June 1979, is that
20 right?

21 **A.** That's right. "There were no regular patterns to the ECTs. Sometimes it would happen
22 twice a day, maybe once a day, or once every few days. You would be told the night before
23 that you would have shock treatment the next day and not to have anything to eat.

24 They would give me a muscle relaxant to paralyse me. It felt like razor blades
25 going through my body. You were fully awake during this time. You could see the silver
26 machine and the assistants holding the electrodes. They would place the electrodes around
27 my head before I became unconscious.

28 Every time after shock therapy I felt faint, dizzy and vomited. I felt terrible. I
29 would vomit and cry and often beg them not to do it again. They would not listen or
30 respond.

31 Sometimes it caused me to become completely blind for a period of time.
32 I complained to the doctor about this on 22 December 1973 and still suffered from loss of
33 vision the following day. It gradually came back.

34 Some of the experiences were horrible. I remember one time I was put into a

1 room with nothing in there, I needed to go to the toilet at night. There were no bells,
2 nothing at all in the room. I was given a large amount of drugs and I couldn't walk.
3 I couldn't make it to the toilet, so I peed on the floor to which I was punished. I was like a
4 walking zombie.

5 On another occasion I complained about being in a room with nothing around me.
6 The room had windows and there was beds and sheet, one blanket and a locker. I was
7 given trial drugs for deep sleep therapy, which lasted about a week. I remember I had to
8 ring a bell to go to the bathroom. I felt so humiliated. I felt like I had no reason to live.
9 I hated myself.

10 As a result of the frequency of ECT, I ended up with seeping electrode burns on
11 my scalp. This became one of the grounds for my ACC claim. Hairdressers sometime
12 comment on my head burns.

13 I was often given enemas of soap and water as a punishment. On one occasion
14 I tried to jump in a river because of the drugs. I got severely reprimanded for the carpet
15 being wet when I came in and was given an enema.

16 Perhaps the most damaging effect it has had on me is my loss of memory. This
17 has been accepted as true in a psychiatric report in a letter dated 9 September 1993 by Les
18 Ding. I cannot remember anything about key events in my life, particularly during my 20s.
19 I often find I cannot remember old friends. I also have severe tinnitus and severe
20 headaches, which I believe is a result of the treatment I suffered at Princess Margaret
21 Hospital.

22 I can recall the doctor who treated me. I would see him once or twice a week. He
23 would ask me all sorts of questions about being a lesbian. He would ask me questions like,
24 'How many times a week do you have sex with your partner' and, 'What is it like'. I would
25 become very scared and not want to be left in the room alone with him.

26 As I became institutionalised I would ask for ECT and they would give it to me.
27 I ended up hating myself so much. It was a form of self-loathing, which I believe was
28 caused by the medication I was given.

29 I felt terrible being labelled an alcoholic, a schizophrenic and a drug addict. Yes,
30 I did take some drugs recreationally while I was a student, but I certainly was never an
31 addict. These things were not true. I eventually got all three of these things wiped off my
32 records.

33 There was never any follow-up from the hospital despite years and years of
34 treatment.

1 Subsequently, in year 2000, I was diagnosed with hepatitis C. I had initially
2 thought this was caused by my dentist. However, it is at least possible this was contracted
3 during my time at Princess Margaret Hospital and likely through the electrodes being used
4 during ECT. I believe that Princess Margaret did not use disposable electrodes between
5 1975 to 1980. Bill Jang, a counsellor at the Hepatitis C Resource Centre, advocated for me
6 and wrote a letter on or around 2 October 2008 in support of my claim which is included in
7 my bundle of documents.

8 During my treatment at Princess Margaret, I remember making several complaints
9 to individual doctors. I wasn't sure at the time if they were official complaints. I was never
10 even sure whether we as patients could make an official complaint. No-one ever listened.

11 I complained when I felt scared. I always complained before ECT. I complained
12 about my memory loss. The doctor would always call me 'girl'. He would say "No need to
13 worry girl, it will come back". I would tell my parents, but they never questioned authority.
14 My memory got blurrier and blurrier. I felt like I'd never be believed.

15 I also remember making complaints about the burns to my scalp. I made a
16 complaint to the same doctor who called me 'girl'. He said to me that it was unfortunate,
17 but it does happen on occasions. The burns got worse and I still have scarring. As noted
18 above, sometimes hairdressers do comment on them.

19 I remember it was always frustrating to be in an institution trying to get treatment
20 and never being believed. It felt incredibly isolating.

21 Over the years, I tried numerous ways to get recognition and redress. I felt like
22 no-one would listen to me or believe what happened to me.

23 My lawyer was initially from Johnston and Lawrence. He filed a statement of
24 claim dated 13 January 2005, but these proceedings never went anywhere, because as far as
25 I can recall, the Crown relied on the Limitation Act defence. Unfortunately, I do not have a
26 complete record of the court documents.

27 I complained to my local MP for Wigram, Jim Anderton. He helped me a lot. He
28 wrote a letter to the Associate Minister of Health, Jonathan Coleman, pointing out that I
29 had spent all of my inheritance money on expensive lawyers' fees and telling him how cruel
30 it was to make survivors undergo the trauma of court cases. Mr Anderton also wrote to
31 former Minister of Justice, Simon Power, and Attorney-General, Chris Finlayson.
32 Unfortunately, I only have a copy to the former Attorney-General available.

33 I also had to get support of my doctor of 25 years, Dr Michael Glen. He wrote a
34 letter dated 25 August 2010 on my behalf about the excessive treatment I received at

1 Princess Margaret Hospital. His letters note that my life would have been very different if
2 not for that treatment.

3 **Q.** Joan, I'll just ask you to pause there, because you've attached as exhibits a couple of those
4 letters and I thought it might be useful just to have a look at them. The first one I'll call up
5 is Appendix E which will be before you shortly, Commissioners. Is that on the screen in
6 front of you, Joan?

7 **A.** Yes.

8 **Q.** I think we can see that's a letter dated 23 August 2010 and it's to the Honourable
9 Christopher Finlayson, who was then the Attorney-General. We're going to have a look at
10 a paragraph over the page. It's highlighted there, I think it's paragraph number 5. Do you
11 want to just read that particular paragraph that we've called up?

12 **A.** "After her last admittance in 1983, Joan decided to go cold turkey and come off all drugs.
13 She has had no mental health symptoms since and the late Dr Les Ding, formally of
14 Sunnyside Hospital, stated that the diagnosis of schizophrenia was wrong. Her current GP
15 is also prepared to state that there have been no symptoms of mental illness in the time he
16 has known Joan".

17 **Q.** Thank you, we'll have a look at the other letter that you referred to as well, which is from
18 Dr Michael Glen. I think that's been brought up as well. That's dated a couple of days after
19 Jim Anderton's letter, it's dated 25 August 2010. There are a couple of paragraphs
20 highlighted there as well. We'll bring up the top one. Can you read that?

21 **A.** "I first met Joan and her family in 1985 and have continued as her general practitioner since
22 then. According to her inpatient notes, I understand Joan was diagnosed as schizophrenic
23 and was treated with a variety of psychotropic medications and ECT. Since I have known
24 Joan, for the last 24 years, I have seen her through a variety of stresses in her life, but she
25 has never exhibited any signs of mental disorder. She has never had any delusions,
26 hallucinations or been out of touch with reality. Her mood has been remarkably stable,
27 despite some quite traumatic times over those years and I think her personality function has
28 shown great resilience and strength. As Joan has not exhibited any signs of mental health
29 disorder during the years that I have known her, I think it is very unlikely that a diagnosis
30 of schizophrenia can be sustained."

31 **Q.** Thank you, then we'll bring up also the paragraph down below, which has also been
32 highlighted.

33 **A.** "I think it would be unlikely to find a more deserving recipient of compensation for this
34 lady's harrowing time. Despite the difficulties, she has remained stable, stoical and bears

1 little bitterness about the direction her life took following those years in hospital care.
2 I suspect her life path may have been very different if not for her medical treatment".

3 **Q.** What do you think about that?

4 **A.** Absolutely right. I feel very sad that I didn't continue my nursing training. I think my life
5 would have certainly taken a different turn, yeah.

6 **Q.** Thank you. I'll bring you back to your statement. I think we got up to paragraph 6.5?

7 **A.** Thank you. "I think it's incredibly disappointing that survivors need to rely on local MPs
8 and doctors to speak up on their behalf. There is no publicly available information on how
9 one can make a claim or clear processes for doing so. There was also no real support, in
10 terms of funding for expensive lawyers, for people like me. I do acknowledge that
11 I received some Crown-funded counselling, which did help.

12 It felt to me like these letters were going nowhere. I never got any kind of
13 meaningful response to any of them.

14 The only progress was made when the Crown Health Funding Agency process
15 occurred. I put in my claim which was assessed. On 27 January 2012, after so many years
16 of trying to get recognition, I received a letter from the Crown Law setting out terms of
17 settlement offer. Those terms gave me a wellness payment of \$4,000, a small contribution
18 of \$4,250 to my legal costs, which were in reality much more than that, and an apology.
19 But there was no admission of liability by the Crown. Also, we were required to keep the
20 settlement confidential so had no way of comparing quantum with other claimants.

21 The settlement was also very uncertain for me. I received advice from my lawyer
22 saying the wellness payment might have tax implications which could not be ruled out.
23 Also, because of my ACC claim, I was told that my wellness payment might needed to be
24 paid back to the Crown because of my ACC payments might have already compensated me
25 for those damages. It was totally disillusioning. How could the Crown pay us
26 compensation only to take it back again? There was no certainty for me as a survivor of my
27 settlement.

28 Also, I felt very pressured to accept the offer, even though to me it was totally
29 insufficient for what was done to me. The reason is because there were no other options
30 available. I heard the Crown would just hide behind the fact that the claims happened so
31 long ago to escape any liability and to prevent us from having our stories heard and
32 recognised.

33 I made a claim to ACC for personal injury related by my scalp burns in 1987. I
34 was finally given some compensation, \$10,000 for burns and \$1,500 for chronic headaches

1 in 1999.

2 For burns I suffered to my scalp it was all done through a lawyer. I had to get
3 photographs of my scalp. I can remember ACC saying that they couldn't believe I had
4 burns to my scalp caused by electrodes. They said it could have been cigarette burns.
5 I never was a smoker.

6 I made claims related to my hepatitis C diagnosis. I got support to confirm that it
7 was possible that I contracted hepatitis C at my time in Princess Margaret. My claim was
8 ultimately denied. It felt like ACC never took the claim seriously. The officials at ACC
9 were constantly questioning whether what happened was true. They constantly sought to
10 deny my claims and I had to get numerous decisions reviewed over the course of years. I
11 have included documentation related to my ACC claim as evidence.

12 The process of redress was difficult. There was never any clarity or certainty.
13 There was also never any support through the process. I constantly felt like I was battling
14 uphill to get people to recognise me or believe what I was saying actually happened.

15 There needs to be a clear process in place with financial resources and other
16 support for those who have a legitimate claim, in terms of the toll that the process has on
17 family welfare and mental health. Having this would have alleviated a great deal of
18 personal stress.”

19 Thank you.

20 **Q.** Joan, thank you.

21 **MR MOLLOY:** What I'm going to suggest, Madam Chair, is that we take a short break to allow
22 Joan to just reflect, take a pause and think whether perhaps there's anything she wanted to
23 elaborate on or add, and there may well be matters you would like to address as well.

24 **CHAIR:** Thank you for that opportunity.

25 Are you happy for that to occur? We'll just take a short break, take a breather.

26 **A.** Yes.

27 **Q.** And come back in 10 minutes or so?

28 **MR MOLLOY:** 10 or 15 minutes. Thank you.

29 **CHAIR:** Thank you very much.

30 **Adjournment from 11.31 am to 12.05 pm**

31 **CHAIR:** Yes, Mr Molloy.

32 **MR MOLLOY:** Thank you, ma'am.

33 **QUESTIONING BY MR MOLLOY:**

34 **Q.** Joan, thank you for your evidence this morning. You gave a compelling account of your

1 experiences in the past and you explained to us the difficulties of trying to make
2 complaints, of pursuing litigation, of having to rely upon letters from MPs, of seeking ACC
3 compensation. Do you have an idea of what a good process should look like?

4 A. Yes, well I don't wish anybody to have gone through the length of what I went through to
5 try and seek redress. I think that with people's notes, and we've got people's notes, I think
6 that there should be one short process and I think there should be compensation for that and
7 then finish. That should be the end, not this lengthy process of not being believed, being
8 believed, not being believed, pulling out any funds that you have, and it seemed to go on
9 and on forever. I just think it's hard enough trying to relive without having all this constant
10 disbelief all the time. So, I really think what needs to happen is to have proof and to have a
11 short hearing, whatever necessary compensation is necessary, finish.

12 Q. Thank you. I understand there were just a few other matters that had occurred to you as
13 you were speaking this morning and that you'd like to add or amend your evidence with?

14 A. Yes, yes.

15 Q. I think there was an occasion on which an old school friend arranged a date for you?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. Do you want to talk about that?

18 A. Yes, it was in the times I was allowed out for the day and one of my old school friends just
19 wouldn't believe that I didn't want to go out with guys and if I went out with a guy
20 I might -- my sexuality might change, and so she arranged this date for me and I was -- at
21 the time I was at my parents' and this guy came to my parents' place and mum said "Please
22 don't give Joan any alcohol if you're taking her out for lunch because she's on quite a large
23 dose of medication" and he said "Of course, no, no, no".

24 And anyway, the first place he took me was to this pub and I had -- all I can
25 remember is just being plied with alcohol, alcohol and I can't remember having any lunch.
26 Then he took me back to his family bach where, or his bach for him and his wife and his
27 children, and he attempted to rape me there and plied me with honey mead wine or cider
28 until I was almost comatose and I didn't have the strength to fight him off, and he took me
29 back to my parents' place and pushed me out of the car, and mum and dad immediately
30 thought I'd taken an overdose.

31 So, I was rushed to Princess Margaret Hospital without any questions at all, I was
32 given a stomach pump to pump out the drugs that I'd supposedly had and no voice, no
33 opinion, and that was the end of that. And then there was a long stem in hospital and
34 no-one really knew what happened, I was never asked what happened and I was too

1 ashamed to say what had happened, so -- it was just another form of not being listened to or
2 no-one talked to me, I just went straight in and had my stomach pumped and that was the
3 end of that, you know, yeah.

4 **Q.** I think you also showed me your wrists?

5 **A.** Yes, I, through -- I just, through the whole prior, I hated myself and I was becoming to hate
6 myself more and more, and in the end I just self-harmed all the time. I just wanted to die.
7 I really wanted -- well, I think I wanted to die. Probably if I really wanted to die,
8 I probably would be dead, but I felt at the time that I wanted to die, I hated myself. So,
9 consequently, I've got scarring, terrible scarring on my wrists, which is a horrible reminder,
10 I don't really like being reminded of the past.

11 **Q.** We're jumping around a little bit. These were the things that you were thinking of?

12 **A.** Yes.

13 **Q.** I think you mentioned also you were given some frank, perhaps not very helpful, advice
14 while you were in hospital on one occasion about whether or not to become a parent?

15 **A.** Yes. I was -- we used to go and see the doctor in his office once a week or twice a week
16 and one of the things he said to me was "Girl I'd just like you to know that I really don't
17 want you to have children because your children, there's a high possibility they'll be
18 intellectually disabled like you will be(sic)". So that always, especially I thought well, you
19 know, I probably wouldn't have had children, but it certainly stopped me from having
20 children, yeah.

21 **Q.** Have you ever considered yourself, or has anyone else outside of the hospital system ever
22 considered you to have an intellectual disability?

23 **A.** Well, I think my parents believed it because, as I said, they thought doctors were always
24 right, but at the same time they couldn't understand and they could see their daughter
25 declining in hospital when you're meant to go to hospital to get well, and I was getting
26 sicker and sicker. So just, no, I don't think so, no.

27 **Q.** You also mentioned to me an occasion when you were with a film maker, Jim Marbrook.

28 **A.** Yes.

29 **Q.** Tell us about that?

30 **A.** Jim approached me, Jim Marbrook approached me and wanted to make a film on what had
31 happened to me. He was actually doing a film on psychiatric institutions and people that
32 had been in them, but unfortunately he ran out of money. But I was very close to one of the
33 doctors who used to work at Princess Margaret, we became friends because she supported
34 me all the way through and didn't like what had happened to me, and she was also -- we

1 became good friends, and they wanted to film her as well and -- I've just forgotten what I
2 was -- sorry.

3 **CHAIR:** Take your time, just take a deep breath.

4 **QUESTIONS BY MR MOLLOY CONTINUED:**

5 **Q.** Did you go to the hospital with Jim on one occasion?

6 **A.** Yes, yes, and we did some filming, we went to Princess Margaret Hospital and he wanted --
7 the rooms were still there that they did the ECTs in and they wouldn't let us through the
8 doors of the hospital. So yes, I thought that was interesting, yeah.

9 **Q.** I think the one other thing that you wanted to mention concerned a family member?

10 **A.** Yes, I've got -- my only family member is my dear sister and she's been a professional
11 person and in the nursing -- she's been a nurse and she owns rest homes and that, and I don't
12 think she wants to know what's happened to me and I can't talk to her and she won't
13 acknowledge what happened. I think it's too hurtful for her and that's the only thing in my
14 life that I would, you know, I'll go to my grave really sad about that I haven't been able to
15 talk to my sister about it, yeah.

16 **Q.** The relationship in all other respects is a good one?

17 **A.** Wonderful, yeah, very close.

18 **Q.** Joan, was there anything else that you wanted to say?

19 **A.** There was one thing and it's just gone out of my head. I think that is all, thank you.

20 **Q.** Do you want me to check with your friend just to see if she can remember what it might be
21 and we can prompt you?

22 **A.** No.

23 **MR MOLLOY:** Ma'am, might I check?

24 **CHAIR:** Please do. Joan, I appreciate this is a very stressful place to try and think about these
25 things, so if you can just relax and don't worry if you can't remember.

26 **A.** Thank you. I think I've remembered. Another thing that was very demeaning, I thought,
27 was during the days when I weren't in hospital they wanted me to, they said to mum and
28 dad "This is a good place for Joan to go" and I went up to this place and it was all young
29 Down's Syndrome people there and I just thought I shouldn't be here, this is weird, you
30 know, how sick actually am I?

31 You know, and I became terribly, terribly confused because I thought, you know,
32 what's happening, why am I not around people that aren't ill? It was terribly -- I felt
33 terribly -- it was just -- not against the people that were there, but for myself I didn't feel
34 that I was in the right place and I just felt my life was being channelled for me for

1 something that shouldn't be happening. So, they weren't very happy that I didn't go, but
2 I refused to be put in that situation, I just didn't think I should be there.

3 **Q.** Roughly how old were you at that time, can you remember?

4 **A.** 19, yeah, about 19.

5 **Q.** Was there anything else?

6 **A.** That's all, thank you.

7 **CHAIR:** Thank you, Mr Molloy.

8 Joan, thank you so much for your evidence. The Commissioners have listened very
9 carefully. We had some questions which Mr Molloy has put to you about the redress
10 matters, which is what we're all here about today. But we just want to thank you very much
11 for the time and effort that you've put in to this and the long wait you had to give your
12 evidence, which was beyond any control, but now you've done it and you can be satisfied
13 that you've been well heard.

14 **A.** Thank you very much.

15 **Q.** Thank you so much for coming.

16 **A.** Thank you.

17 **CHAIR:** The witness can now be excused.

18 **MR MOLLOY:** Thank you ma'am. Thank you, Joan, very much for your help.

19 **A.** Thank you.

20 **CHAIR:** Mr Mount, is there anything else?

21 **MR MOUNT:** That concludes our evidence for today, Commissioners. We have an early start
22 tomorrow at 9 o'clock with the link to the Falkland Islands and, as I say, that is the evidence
23 for today. I'm not sure, in terms of our closing for the day, whether we have our team to
24 help us with our normal waiata process. I'm getting a nod from Ms Chapman at the back of
25 the hearing room, which is an encouraging nod.

26 **CHAIR:** Haere mai kōrua.

27 **Hearing closes with karakia mutunga and waiata by Ngāti Whātua Ōrākei.**

28 **REGISTRAR:** This sitting is adjourned.

29 **Hearing adjourned at 12.22 pm to Wednesday,**

30 **23 September 2020 at 9 am**

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