

Witness Name: Alison ADAMS

Statement No: WITN0894001

Dated: 6/12/ 2021

ROYAL COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO ABUSE IN CARE

WITNESS STATEMENT OF ALISON ADAMS

I, Alison ADAMS, will say as follows:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Alison ADAMS. I am the mother of Malcolm ADAMS, DOB [GRO-C]1960, and Nigel ADAMS, DOB [GRO-C]1961. I am also the mother of Karen who is older than the boys.
- 1.2 Malcolm is intellectually disabled and has pervasive developmental disorder with secondary autism, epilepsy (life threatening) and Parkinson's disease.
- 1.3 Nigel is intellectually disabled and has pervasive developmental disorder with secondary autism.

Life pre-Templeton

- 1.4 My sons were diagnosed as mentally retarded when they were three and four years of age by Dr Marshall at the Health Department. I was told to put them in Templeton and forget I ever had them. That was not an option. I still remember driving back from the doctor's appointment and the Police stopped me. I was so upset. Malcolm grabbed the police officer's infringement book and was screwing it up. The police officer took one look at me and the boys and said I had enough to cope with and let me go.
- 1.5 At that time the boys' only problem was that they had no speech. They were toilet trained, played normally, had won baby shows and they were very attractive guys. Malcolm could dress and undress himself. He went to kindergarten for three years. Malcolm loved music.
- 1.6 I had divorced my then husband when Nigel was three months old and one of the conditions of the divorce was, he would pay no maintenance. I took in two boarders as well as working three other jobs around my children. It was a balancing act.
- 1.7 I then decided to open a children's day nursery, so I quit my jobs and the boarders left.

[GRO-C]

- 1.8 There was a "backwards" class at North Beach School. The teacher of the class was happy to have my boys, but I was prevented from sending them there. It's such a pity because I think they would have learned something in that class.
- 1.9 They had to be "assessed" by a psychologist from the Department of Education called Barry Rich. He worked with Dr Marshall who ran Templeton. Barry Rich went to the kindergarten and watched Malcolm through a two-way mirror. One of the teachers told me Malcolm looked in the mirror and seemed to sense that there was someone on the other side. Barry Rich said Malcolm was mentally retarded. Dr Marshall told me to put them in Templeton and forget them. That happened to so many boys.
- 1.10 But I would not give up the boys, so they said they had to go to a special school Ferndale at age five. Before that the boys went to kindergarten.
- 1.11 Nigel hated it. My hyperactive son did not sleep well and became very destructive, and my doctor told me my daughter, who was seven, would have a nervous breakdown. I had to resort to respite care in Templeton.

Move to the USA

- 1.12 I met Laurie in September 1967. We married in February 1968, and he adopted my children. That made it possible to put Nigel into a private school Hohepa (in Christchurch) and have him home at weekends. Miss Farrow who managed the school loved Nigel and he became very settled.
- 1.13 Laurie, who was in "Deep Freeze" with the US Navy returned to the States. The plan was he would be six months in NZ and six months in US. However, the Navy gave him orders "states side", i.e he had to stay in the US. He still had five years left until he could retire. The marriage would not last with a five year separation. It was complicated. Visas for the boys were denied. So while my husband was in the USA, I was talking to the USA embassy, and someone told me as long as I put in for two of them you will be denied. You should put in for just one and you might have a chance. I put in for Malcolm and we were accepted.
- 1.14 Miss Farrow asked me to leave Nigel with her so in 1970, Malcolm and Karen and I went to the States. We got stationed in Georgia. It was hard to leave Nigel, but he was doing very well at Hohepa. Hohepa was supposed to run on Rudolf Steiner principles. Nigel was hyperactive but Ms Farrow got the staff to persevere with him. The Navy paid for him to be in Hopeha.
- 1.15 In 1973 we got a letter saying Miss Farrow had died of cancer and I was needed back home, or they were going to put Nigel in Templeton. Laurie had two years left to retire. We eventually got orders back on compassionate grounds on condition he put his papers in to retire and that's what we did.
- 1.16 When Malcolm was in the USA, he was in a school called Happy House. He was one of only 5 in his class. He could read his own name. He was doing a lot. He could dress himself. He was toilet trained. He wore jeans – could take them off and undo his belt. He was like any normal boy apart from his communication. He taught himself to ride a two-wheeler bike and he was chosen for the USA special Olympics in 1971 for running and softball throwing. We spent three years in USA.

Return to New Zealand

- 1.17 On arrival home we found Nigel, aged 12, had become a perfect little gentleman. He was talking in Dutch, German and Māori, and sang beautifully.
- 1.18 When we returned Malcolm, aged 13 years old had to return to Ferndale and he hated it. He had behavioural problems and he was eventually expelled. There were 16 disabled children in the class being taught by a girl who was disabled herself. Malcolm was locked in the toilet at Ferndale. He turned the taps on and flooded the place.
- 1.19 Nigel stayed at Hohepa until about 1975 when he was 14 years old. However, the school had changed with Miss Farrow dying and I think eventually all the residents were moved to Templeton. Nigel went to Ferndale after that, but it wasn't for him either. The boys attacked a taxi driver.
- 1.20 I had Nigel at home for a while, but I couldn't cope with Malcolm. I had severe back problems that resulted in surgery. The surgery became medical misadventure when the surgeon operated on the wrong vertebrae, and I have lived with pain ever since.
- 1.21 Malcolm went into an IHC family home initially. He was there for 3 days and they told me to come get him. When I picked him up he was covered in welts. The IHC house was at the top end of [GRO-B] Street by the hill. He had been beaten. Around this time, Malcolm was raging. He was going around smashing windows.

2. Templeton 1977-1998

2.1 Timeline:

- 2.1.1 Malcolm goes to Templeton for respite care in late 1977
- 2.1.2 Malcolm goes to Templeton permanently in 1978
- 2.1.3 Nigel went to Templeton about one year later in 1979
- 2.1.4 By the 1990s the staffing and care was good at Templeton, but the accommodation was not fit for purpose
- 2.1.5 Mid 1990s Templeton closure was mooted, and Parents' Association opposed the closure
- 2.1.6 In 1998 the boys moved into Brackenridge which is a group of houses built on Templeton grounds
- 2.1.7 I bought the house the boys live in currently about 13 years ago. The house is staffed by Brackenridge staff.

3. Malcolm Experiences in Templeton

- 3.1 Malcolm entered the Templeton Centre in late 1977 for respite care due to me having severe back problems requiring surgery.

Over Medication

- 3.2 After two weeks in Templeton, I went out to see him. I had been told to stay away for six weeks. Malcolm had been put on medication and turned into a zombie. He couldn't even walk and was lying in his own urine. It was shocking.
- 3.3 I demanded to see the manager and was told he was put on medication to make life easier for the staff. Malcolm until then had never been on any form of medication. At that time, they took him off the medication and moved him to another villa. Malcolm came home to us every other weekend. I called it "time out" for him (from Templeton) and I needed to assure myself he was alright.
- 3.4 Initially he was only supposed to be there for a short time, but it turned permanent. Once he went for respite care, he stayed there. In those first six months, the thing about Malcolm which is hard to imagine, he would come home every other weekend and he always went back happy. Forgetting in a way what had happened while he was there. He never played up, he just accepted it. It is weird. I didn't know what was going on in those six months, but his behaviour changed.

Physical Beating and Death

- 3.5 We went to get Malcolm home for the weekend. It was his birthday. I found his head covered in stitches, he had two black eyes he could hardly see out of, a front tooth broken, as well as his nose and red welts all over his body. We had not been informed of what had happened.
- 3.6 The doctor of Templeton was standing outside the villa. He said Malcolm had been found in his bed about midnight all bloody and unconscious and if we had allowed him to put Malcolm on medication it would not have happened. We argued with him and then took Malcolm to the police station where a police doctor said he had been viciously beaten with a weapon. A police search at the time found nothing. No-one was charged. There may be records of this. Nobody really treated it as if a crime had happened.
- 3.7 A couple of weeks after Malcolm was abused, a resident was killed. It was the same type of abuse. He was beaten and a "broom handle was shoved up his bum and it killed him". This was in Rimu villa. It was all covered up. The boys were preyed on. I don't know if this was committed by staff or other boys.

Seizures

- 3.8 I asked for a change of villa which I hoped would be better for Malcolm. It was worse. About six months after being beaten Malcolm started to have grand mal seizures. I believe he received a fractured skull during the attack but to x-ray him would require a general anaesthetic. The doctors at the time refused to do that. When it comes to health, my boys are treated as second class citizens. The doctors don't bother because they would have to be sedated to do medical investigations.
- 3.9 His seizures can be life threatening and can occur if he is constipated, bangs his head or loses the plot. On a home stay weekend not long after he went to Templeton, he lost the plot, had a seizure and in order to give him his medication I had to clear his bowel. On doing this I was shocked to find thousands of parasites in his bowel. I knew the residents were to be

wormed twice a year. I was informed by staff the money they received each year for worming (about \$2000) had been reallocated to the new heart unit by the Hospital Board. I was furious and I went directly to the then manager of the hospital and demanded he reinstate that money, or I would go to the media. They agreed to my demand.

- 3.10 The next serious event that occurred was that Malcolm went to GRO-C-1 Hospital. He had 17 seizures. They asked me if I wanted to save him or let him go. Malcolm was only in his 20's then. I said of course I wanted my son to be alive. They had to ventilate him. The doctor said to me and said he could be brain damaged from the seizures. They broke his teeth when they were ventilating him. He had broken his teeth also when he had his seizures.
- 3.11 They eventually sent him to a single room in a ward and I stayed with him. At one stage he woke up but all I got was a blank stare. I laid down beside him and put my arms around him and must have fallen asleep. Next I felt his hand on my face and he said, "are you hiding". I looked into his eyes and knew my son had come back to me. We had not seen a staff member all night. I rang the bell. A nurse came in and found his catheter bag was full of blood. He had gone into kidney failure. The doctor arrived with Malcolm's records and informed me that my son (two weeks before the event) had been put on anti-psychotics. He said your son is autistic and should never be treated with anti-psychotics.
- 3.12 Autistic people have low Dopamine. Anti-psychotics lower Dopamine further and they become medically fragile. He agreed with me that Malcolm possibly had a fractured skull which led to him become an epileptic. He put a red flag on Malcolm's file stating he was never to be given anti-psychotics again and put him on medication for his seizures.
- 3.13 I didn't know the Doctor's name. He was Canadian. He knew about the dopamine levels, and he is the one that first told me about that. Then Tony Attwood reinforced it. Tony was the psychologist who came over here mainly for Hohepa. I managed to get an appointment with him through the Autistic Association. Then I asked him to come to Templeton to help at de-institutionalisation?
- 3.14 Because he was handicapped, he was treated differently in hospital than the other patients. It also demonstrates the serious lack of knowledge by Templeton about people with autism.

Dayroom Abuse and Incontinence

- 3.15 While at Templeton, Malcolm became incontinent. They had these big dayrooms with chairs all around the hall. They were locked in there with no toilets and a guard on the door. They had no choice but to wet their pants. They couldn't get out to go to the toilet. There were no toys or anything to stimulate them. They just sat around the hall.
- 3.16 Malcolm still goes on about dayrooms. He will still say to you sometimes "I'll put you in the day room" and points his finger. If someone growls at Malcolm or raises their voice to him he will lose the plot. Someone has obviously done that a lot. One staff member in particular at Templeton, he spotted her in the corridor one day. They were long corridors. He was in the Special Olympics for running in the USA so he can run. He ran down the hallway and attacked her – broke her arm. He got her back for the way she treated him.
- 3.17 Maple Villa was the only villa that got the boys out walking. John Field, the person in charge was very good at getting them out and moving them. The rest of the villas used to complain about it.

- 3.18 My boys used to come home, Nigel in particular, with bruises inside his ear. Right inside his ear like someone had pulled him around by his ear. Next then, Malcolm started coming home with bruises in his ear. So, I said to the guy in charge – when he was in Totara Villa – I said to the guy in charge of that villa, “how is he getting these bruises in his ear – Nigel has come home with them too – what is going on?”. And he said oh someone has been pulling him around by his ear. The guy sitting next to him I knew he worked in Maple villa. Now he was working in Totara. I looked at them and said, “if either one of my sons comes home with bruises in their ears, I will have your guts for garters”. It stopped after there. I think it must have been the staff causing the bruises.

Admittance to Sunnyside

- 3.19 I phoned Templeton one Friday to get Malcolm for the weekend and was told he had been sent to Sunnyside. I exploded. I hung up and went to Sunnyside to get my son. On arrival they tried to stop me from seeing him. I argued with the doctor who in the end said, “well he is not our problem, he is Templeton’s problem”. He took me to a cell with a mattress on the floor that my son was on in the foetal position. When I asked what medication, they had put him on, he said Haloperidol, an anti-psychotic. He had not bothered to read his file.
- 3.20 I phoned Templeton. They would not tell me how long he had been there and because of his condition they did not want him back. I told them I was not leaving him there. The staff at Sunnyside helped me to get Malcolm in the car and I drove to Templeton. When I got back to Totara villa, they were putting a locked door on a room with a window in it to put Malcolm in. They were going to lock him up in there. That is when I decided that’s it – I’ve had enough. And I went to see John about getting Malcolm into Maple villa where Nigel was.
- 3.21 They kept him in that locked room for a couple of days before I managed to get him out. I think he had been locked in seclusion a lot. That’s the one thing Malcolm couldn’t stand – to be in a locked room. Nigel is the same. By the time Malcolm was in his 20’s he had experienced seclusions a lot. They do not like being locked in rooms.
- 3.22 I was informed by the doctor at Templeton that the medication Malcolm had been put on by Sunnyside would have to be lowered slowly. I went out there every day to be with Malcolm to make sure he was alright.
- 3.23 While coming off the medication he started to self-mutilate his toes and fingers. I couldn’t take him home as he needed to be supervised by the doctor daily. Once off the medication I brought him home. By this time Malcolm had become a very angry man and I don’t blame him. I had no choice but to take him back as my husband had to go back to work. He had had time off to be home for him.
- 3.24 I never found out how he got admitted to Sunnyside without me knowing. Dr Marshall said to me “some parents come to pick their kids up and find a finger missing”. I was basically told I should feel lucky my son was only transferred not abused. It was totally acceptable that these people were being abused.
- 3.25 Something must have happened with his behaviour at Templeton. And I think it was after Christmas when they were short staffed. They chose to move him to Sunnyside. And Sunnyside drugged him. Sunnyside were happy for me to take him back. It was a mental hospital – they wouldn’t have known he wasn’t supposed to have anti-psychotics, because they didn’t know about autism and intellectual disabilities.

Sexual abuse

- 3.26 I just couldn't believe the next emotional turmoil that I was faced with. Malcolm was home on weekends and was backing away from me when I showered him, especially when I tried to wash his private parts. I knew he was being interfered with. Malcolm never showed signs of masturbation. His brother did, but not Malcolm. I never confronted the staff. It would have been useless. There were different staff on different shifts. I don't know whether it was other residents or the staff, but I think it was the staff. I was told by a staff member that it was the charge nurse at Totara villa and in the day room she would have residents riding each other (sexually) and she would laugh. Just for fun.
- 3.27 I received a phone call from a staff member who told me Malcolm had had an erection for several days and needed to be taken to the hospital. They had tried ice etc. and nothing was working. I called Laurie to get off work and we went to Templeton, picked up Malcolm and went straight to the hospital.
- 3.28 They stuck a big needle in his penis to try to draw out the blood. Malcolm was not sedated. We had to hold him. It was awful. Nothing was coming up the needle, so they decided they had to operate.
- 3.29 He was operated on that day but when he regained consciousness, he still had an erection, so they had to re-operate. The second operation worked but his penis did not go back to its original size. Malcolm now will masturbate anywhere, anytime given the opportunity.
- 3.30 He had an erection for days on end. I don't know what the doctors said about why it happened. The other guys in hospital thought it was a great joke. Malcolm ran away from me down the corridor with his erection in a short nighty.
- 3.31 He hadn't been preoccupied with his penis prior to being in Totara villa. Nigel used to have erections and he would take care of it himself. Malcolm never thought about it before. He can't live with other people now because his hands are always heading in that direction. He has just been diagnosed with an enlarged prostate and is on medication for that for the last couple of months. Luckily, he seems to be doing alright with it but the doctor says it isn't cancer so that's good.
- 3.32 I have never seen Malcolm want to hurt anybody else, apart from the staff member he charged at. It has all been directed against him. They used to give the boys cold showers.

Move to Maple Villa

- 3.33 After the operation on his penis, he spent time at home to heal and during that time I contacted the nurse of Nigel's villa and asked him if he had spare bed in his villa. He of course said I would have to talk to management. If said if you could tell me you have a spare bed and agree to having Malcolm, I will go see the manager. He called me back later that day and said, "go for it". He had made room for another bed. The guys had their own beds out at Templeton. I phoned the manager and told him I wanted Malcolm moved to be with his brother. He said no at first, they won't have a bed for him. I told him I had organised that and the charge nurse has agreed to have him. Of course, I got told off. For some reason they did not want my sons together. They had been kept separate for over 10 years.
- 3.34 Malcolm moved to Maple villa. From memory it was around 1990. When Malcolm walked in that villa and saw Nigel, I knew it was the right move. When he got into that villa, he

changed. He and Nigel were out in the playground together – it was much better. Malcolm changed completely and his behaviour settled down.

3.35 Around that time word was out the Templeton Centre was to be closed. Templeton eventually closed in 1998.

4. Nigel abuse in Templeton

4.1 I kept Nigel home for longer than Malcolm. I think Nigel went into Templeton in 1979. There was no choice. My husband had to work, and I had my back problems.

Over Medication, Abuse and Incontinence

4.2 Despite Nigel being the well behaved guy, like Malcolm, he ended up on anti-psychotics. Again, I had to go over the same arguments I had over Malcolm. Nigel also became incontinent. His table manners, speech, everything was lost. Getting them home at weekends I had noticed a scab on Nigel's lower centre back which was definitely a cigarette burn. He still has the scar.

4.3 Nigel came home one time with a plaster on the top of his left ear. When I asked what had happened, I got told another resident had bitten that part of his ear off.

Neglect – Weight Loss

4.4 Nigel suddenly started to lose weight. I complained, it fell on deaf ears, so I took him to a specialist who wrote to Templeton saying that he was suffering from malnutrition. He was 10 stone and in three weeks he was down to six stone. He was getting nothing to eat. The other residents were stealing all his food. I asked where the supervision was and got told Nigel needed to stick up for himself.

4.5 Nigel at this time had a seizure, also due to the anti-psychotics he was on. I took him home, fed him up and took him off the anti-psychotics. He then went back to Templeton. The charge nurse on this villa was not a nice person and I believe he was still medicating Nigel and that became another complaint to management. Nigel now has a fear of going hungry, if he sees any food sitting on the bench or anywhere, he will eat it. For about a week I went out each day at tea time to make sure he was being fed. This resulted in him sitting alone with a staff member while he ate. My well-mannered son was now using his hands to feed himself instead of a knife and fork and downing it so fast he would start to choke. That is still happening today.

Abuse – Shoulder Dislocation

4.6 Nigel's hyperactivity was back, and I had seen staff grabbing him by his arm on many occasions. I blame the way they ran the dayroom. He would come home on the weekend, be sitting on the couch and his shoulder would drop out. He would cringe in pain and pop it back in. His threshold for pain was high.

4.7 This resulted in a trip to x-ray department when his shoulder kept dislocating. His shoulder had to be operated on. The surgeon said he would have to wear a special harness so he couldn't move it for six weeks and it would be safer for him to be home at that time. Operation done we brought him home.

- 4.8 Laurie went back to work. I thought I could manage and did for a couple of days then Nigel lost it. With one hand he picked up a cast iron pot plant (too heavy for me to lift) and threw it at me. It missed but scared the hell out of me. I phoned Laurie to get the next six weeks off work and come home. Those six weeks were hell. Nigel is very strong if he hits you. He can do some damage (the reason for two staff in their home). The reason is he can go off without any warning, especially if he is in pain. He cannot understand what is happening to him and it is his only way of telling you something is wrong.

Neglect – Nigel goes missing

- 4.9 I got a phone call one night to tell me Nigel had gone missing in his pyjamas, and they had called the Police. We dashed out to Templeton. I talked to the Police and asked why they hadn't brought out a tracker dog. The officer said "we can't do that, the dog may be needed in a burglary". I couldn't believe he said that. One rule for us so called normal and a different one for my sons. We searched all night. Eventually he was found in some bush at the back of Templeton around 9.00 am the next morning. He was terrified, cold and very upset so of course I took him home.
- 4.10 I called the Police Department and laid a complaint. I told them if a tracker dog had been used my son would not have spent the night out in the open. A couple of days later I received a phone call back saying in future if one of your sons goes missing, rest assured we will use the tracker dog. I asked him what about the rest of the residents? He replied we can't be out there every five minutes and I hung up disgusted.

Sexual Abuse

- 4.11 Nigel, I believe was also sexually abused, as he used to be a cuddly boy, before he was in Templeton. Now if you get in his space (even mum) he pushes you away.
- 4.12 Nigel suffers from sensory overload; he requires a strict routine and space, when he's out and about with too many people around, such as a mall, can set him off. He's getting better at coping, but you have to adjust to his mood on the day. Now with so many casual staff coming into the house, he is having trouble coping.

Maple Villa

- 4.13 Nigel then had a change of villa and went to what was called New Maple and a charge nurse John that ran it I could trust. As I have already stated then I managed to get Malcolm in Maple unit too and things for both my boys were much better then.

Templeton Generally

- 4.14 Templeton had a welfare council. Alec Cooper ran the Welfare Council. It was a group of business people. They fundraised for Templeton and built the chapel, the riding school, the swimming pool. Whenever anyone was short of anything you could go to the welfare council.
- 4.15 The experience at Templeton depended on which Villa you were in, and which charge nurse ran the Villa. The charge nurse at Maple always had them out for walks. There were 6 staff to each Villa for 40 residents. It did mean some staff could be out walking with some

residents while the others stayed in the Villa with the remaining residents. Templeton was a big place. They also had a bird aviary.

- 4.16 Some of the staff were abusive. There was a staff member called **GRO-B-1** He used to sit at the door of the dayroom with his walking stick and trip the residents up. He was terrible. But it was **GRO-B** John Field who was the good charge nurse at the new Maple Villa.
- 4.17 Most of the villas were locked. When you went to visit, they would unlock the door for you to get in. Malcolm and Nigel were both locked in seclusion rooms at times. I know this as sometimes I saw it for myself. For example, at old Maple villa there was a charge nurse who would medicate the boys and put them in seclusion. I'd go out there and say "where's Malcolm" and they would say he's down in seclusion. That's how I would find out.
- 4.18 I did hear staff swearing at both boys, like calling them "little shits" and the boys started using swear words, like "bastards" that they must have picked up from the staff. There wasn't a lot of kindness shown. Karen remembers going home from visits in tears.
- 4.19 They did have good dental care as they had a school of dentists in Christchurch and Templeton had their own dental clinic. They did want to take out every second back tooth to make it easier for the staff to clean. I said no of course, but I guess that happened to the others. Malcolm did lose a lot of teeth with abscesses and with his seizures.
- 4.20 There was never any attempt to educate the boys at Templeton. They went backwards and lost the little language they had.
- 4.21 Both boys became incontinent at Templeton. They had been toilet trained for years before that. It was because the bathrooms were locked.
- 4.22 During the 90's the staff had got the message that Templeton was going to close so they were on their best behaviour in order to get jobs at Brackenridge. At that time, I was doing a lot of publicity. They were careful around my boys at that time.

5. Post Templeton – Brackenridge 1998-2010

- 5.1 Throughout the 1990s there was talk of Templeton closing. All the parents were on the Templeton Parents Association. We had a management committee to represent the interests of the Templeton residents and I was on the committee.
- 5.2 I was in favour of a sheltered village on the site of Templeton. My view was at least for residents like Malcolm and Nigel, that Templeton by the 1990s was good and all that was needed was the accommodation had to be rebuilt fit for purpose. At Templeton they had room to move, they had a pool, they had riding for disabled, they had a hall etc. A lot of these facilities would not be available in community care.
- 5.3 When you went out to Templeton in the 1990s you would see crowds of people moving around just doing their thing, like playing cricket.
- 5.4 Initially the Health Board were going to move the more severe disabled like Malcolm and Nigel to the old nurse's home at Princess Margaret Hospital. That multi story building was less fit for purpose than Templeton. They had decided numbers of residents that would go there without even assessing them.

- 5.5 Then I put my foot down and said no all the residents needed assessment and diagnoses. A lot of them hadn't been diagnosed. This is when I got Tony Attwood on board, and he diagnosed a lot of them. I thumped my hand on the manager's desk and said, "how many have you killed with the wrong medication dosages". Autistic people have lower dopamine levels. Because of this, medication levels need adjusted. I heard this from a doctor at the hospital when Malcolm had a seizure and was rushed to hospital. They told me my son should never be on anti-psychotics. As soon as you put someone like Malcolm or Nigel on anti-psychotics or any brain altering drug, it affects their dopamine levels. The psychiatrist at Templeton was useless. She was a woman, but I don't remember her name.
- 5.6 This put off the closure. I and others advocated that for residents with multi handicaps that a sheltered village needed to be built. I could not see Malcolm and Nigel living in town on a small section of land. The outcome was ended up being Brackenridge.
- 5.7 Templeton was never to be for the mentally ill. It was for the intellectually disabled. It was donated for the intellectually handicapped. I and my husband both felt the same way. The hospital had no right to sell that land, but they sold it to Ngai Tahu who in turn sold it to Majors and now it is sitting out there unused.
- 5.8 I tried to get more land for them at the new Brackenridge. I met with Ron Mark and another Minister. I met with them about putting in a swimming pool at Brackenridge. There should have been money there. We were promised it. Ron Mark and Jim Anderton – they were going to, if the hospital board gave some of that land back (before they sold it) they would build a swimming pool. They refused to budge on it. The Welfare Council, run by Alec Cooper, was a bit like a rotary council to raise funds. One thing they had money set aside for was a sensory room, for people to go in when they got overloaded. However, it never got built and I don't know what happened to the money.

Nigel and Malcolm Experience of Brackenridge

- 5.9 Brackenridge was established on a small part of Templeton's grounds with 14 houses. A number of community trusts were set up to run houses in the community for the more able residents. Brackenridge was initially run by Peter Campbell, who I didn't get on well with.
- 5.10 The move to Brackenridge was chaotic. At first, the residents were effectively running the place. Everything was very disorganised. The boys were in a house with a total of 6 hyperactive severely autistic men in house number 7 walking into each other with no space to move. The other 4 residents were incompatible with Malcolm and Nigel.
- 5.11 That year Laurie had a heart attack and triple bypass, my [GRO-B-2] had bowel cancer and my mother died, all within three months. It is not a year that I will forget. We continued getting the guys home every other weekend but there were times we were called to get Nigel as his behaviour was compounding on other residents.
- 5.12 While Malcolm was able to go to day service at Penbury during the day, the move to Brackenridge was quite dramatic for Nigel. The house too small, with six noisy guys and no space. He had to stay inside all day every day. He took to lying on his bed, slamming the door and wrecked his room on many occasions. Dishes were thrown at mealtimes at other residents, furniture thrown, plus he would attack those who got in his space. He didn't have a life; it was all very confusing for him to deal with in such a confined space. This behaviour was not short lived, it could go on for days and nights.

- 5.13 Malcolm also didn't cope well. His obsession with masturbation continued. Brackenridge did build on another lounge on my request, but it didn't really help. When you went to visit there was no space to visit privately. The boys just went off to their bedrooms. The other 4 residents were similarly handicapped. It was very noisy. They would moan and groan, and one resident called GRO-B-3 used to get on his hands and knees and bang his head on the floor. GRO-B-3 is still at Brackenridge.
- 5.14 At Brackenridge, with six in a house each with two staff, there is no way to have an outing for people like Nigel and Malcolm. They're still in their "naughty two's". This is why they couldn't get to go to anything at all. If they went out in the van, they would need at least two staff. And that wouldn't work, that's why they didn't have outings. They need a staff member holding their hands when they are out in public.
- 5.15 The problems continued at Brackenridge. It was not the sheltered village that I had imagined. I had fought Peter Campbell for a swimming pool, but I was told the other parents didn't want it. The boys had far less freedom at Brackenridge than they had at Templeton.
- 5.16 Malcolm and Nigel were at Brackenridge from 1998 – 2008.

Move from Brackenridge to own home

- 5.17 For 30 years the so-called experts had got it wrong, and I was always having to pick up the pieces. I was now in my sixties. Having them home was a nightmare. Then what? Brackenridge wasn't working, their behaviour was extreme, they were in the too hard basket, this had to stop. I knew I could do better, and I wanted back the sons I used to have, happy and smiling.
- 5.18 I approached Peter Campbell at Brackenridge about my boys moving out into the community. I also stated to him that I wanted two staff and it would just be the two boys. I offered to buy a house for the boys. He needed to put in individualised funding. He didn't put in for the right type of funding. Also, the boys hadn't had a needs assessment for over 10 years. He agreed to it. But in order to get the individualised funding you had to go through Life Links.
- 5.19 I sold our holiday home in Twizel and our boat, all of which the boys loved, and at age 74 asked the bank for a mortgage to buy them a house. I knew their needs. I just needed the right staff. Janet was chosen three years before I bought the house as I found she would put into practice controls I used for their behaviour.
- 5.20 I bought GRO-C Crescent in Christchurch. Unfortunately, not long after this it was damaged in the earthquakes of 2011. It has since been rebuilt. After I bought the house and got ready to move the boys, then I found out Peter hadn't been to Life Links, and I said he had to do that because the other funding wouldn't go far enough. Then he said he would only do it if I took an additional boy in the house. I said no, it was for my two sons and two staff.
- 5.21 Dr Olive Webb really helped with my boys over the years. She wrote a letter in 2009 to Life Links and Brackenridge supporting the need for Nigel and Malcolm to be in the only residents in the house I had bought by them.
- 5.22 This debate went on for a couple of years. I thought "no, I shouldn't have to". Malcolm had his masturbation problems and Nigel's bad temper – they couldn't live with anyone else.

They had been so badly abused and damaged that they would attack anyone else living in the house.

- 5.23 The funding was given to Brackenridge through the MOH and Life Links. After a lot of fighting with the MOH, two weeks before Christmas – I had been battling with Brackenridge, Life Links and MOH – I thought damn it I'll call the woman at the MOH, and I threatened her. I said either you give me the funding I need for these two boys or I'm going to the media to talk about all the abuse they've suffered. It was a Friday. She said she would get back to me. She called first thing Monday morning and said, "you've got your funding". And then I didn't have to worry about the funding.
- 5.24 The arrangement is I own the house and Brackenridge pay rent and provide the staff, from their allocated funding for my sons. The rent I receive pays the mortgage, rates and insurances. I have a problem at present as Brackenridge say they have overspent by \$70,000, and say I have a debt of \$70,000.
- 5.25 The arrangement is that only Nigel and Malcolm live here. There are two carers during the day and one at night. The house is now 3 bedrooms, one of the bedrooms is for the staff.
- 5.26 The first two years were the worst due to wrong staff being sent to the house and their inability to change for the benefit of the guys. This is where rosters and staffing are very important. Staff have to be compatible with each other as well as the guys. One size does not fit all. With the staff I have now, the guys are now off medication they were put on by psychiatrist called Liz Miller while in Maple villa. They are out and about enjoying their life but there is a dark side that could erupt at any time just by having a staff member who won't conform.
- 5.27 Two of the staff have been with the boys for 20 and 14 years respectively. It's hard to get people I can train to know the boys. A lot with them is body language. They read body language. If someone comes in a bad mood the boys will react to it and there will be a bad day. I always explain this to them.
- 5.28 Nigel is much better. He loves to talk. Of course, mum has been hearing for years from him "I got home, I stay home, I go for holiday" with all the ups and downs with the guys, I know them well. I know how they will react to different staff and situations, and I am extremely lucky to have staff that have taken on board my knowledge of them and we have all reaped the rewards. It is not rocket science, it is plain common sense, meet their needs and you have a house that runs well. Mess with their needs and all hell breaks out. It all comes down to compatibility of all clients and staff.
- 5.29 I recently had to tell them to stop giving Malcolm Lorazepam. It could have killed him. The doctor had forgotten to take him off it. I think this led to the fall. His dopamine levels had fallen. Within 24 hours of taking him off the drug the staff that were on said "wow he's upbeat and drinking". His dopamine levels came up. He'd been on that drug for about 10 months. It's an anti-psychotic.
- 5.30 It's not perfect with our current arrangement but it is a lot better than Templeton or Brackenridge.
- 5.31 The advantages are they can be together. Malcolm has his day programmes. Nigel does meals on wheels on Wednesday and Thursdays – he goes with the delivery man. They go pick up the meals and staff take him to deliver them.

- 5.32 The staff took the boys to Wellington and Auckland. They went to the Auckland Zoo. I wouldn't take Nigel on a plane, but they did. They had a ball. The carers organise things like this. They think of things they can do with the boys.
- 5.33 With COVID they are having to stay home more – they can't wear masks. But they go to Workingman's Club off and on depending what staff are on. They also go to balls and parties. Malcolm loves to dress up nicely. These events are organised by Community Choices, who arrange lots of events for people like my boys.
- 5.34 They have everything in the house. They have a piano and an electric keyboard. A computer thing (tablet) for Malcolm.
- 5.35 I've spent a fortune on them trying to teach them things and I made up their photo albums of their lives but they're getting shoved at cupboards at the house and never looked at. It does aggravate me.
- 5.36 The fact that they are going out quite a bit I am lucky to have because from what I have heard a lot of staff just sit around in the houses and don't take them places.
- 5.37 I've been very lucky that they take them out and about. They have a good life now. They have a full and happy life. They didn't have that at Brackenridge or Templeton.
- 5.38 It's a matter of keeping it that way and having the funding to do it.

The Problem with Brackenridge

- 5.39 I believe it has all been run wrong. I have set an example and it is working. That is a two person service. With the ex-Templeton residents out there, they are all getting up in age (in their 50s and onwards) they could set up two person services in the community if they have the funding for them.
- 5.40 That would open Brackenridge (on the Templeton site) to become respite care which is very much needed. Respite care attracts more funding so they would increase their funding doing that. As long as the numbers were limited, it would make a real difference to their lives. There is simply not enough respite care out there.
- 5.41 The multi-handicapped are often severely disabled, they can't move, and they don't have much of a life. They could be out in the community as they are not violent like the autistic ones can be like my boys.
- 5.42 In the Templeton days, the multiple handicapped "lot" (i.e. parents) came to us because they wanted to know if they could go to Brackenridge. We were warned by staff at Templeton – don't take them, they will cost you a fortune (which they did). But their reason for wanting to stay at Templeton was for fresh air and not to be in the city.
- 5.43 The boys had less freedom at Brackenridge. There were no positives when my boys were there. Now, they have too many managers but because they have got so many houses and residents. Brackenridge has houses in the community as well as the houses on the old Templeton site. They managers are trying to do the best they can. The manager we have now is very good.

6. Impacts of abuse/neglect on Nigel and Malcolm

- 6.1 In addition to the abuse they suffered, Templeton wouldn't put the boys in the same villa for years. They were separated. This is a form of abuse.
- 6.2 There was never an attempt to educate them, really. Both boys went backwards in their development when they went into Templeton and never recovered the skills they had learnt. They did not reach their full potential.
- 6.3 The long-term impact on Malcolm from his time in Templeton and Brackenridge:
- a. He will always have a fear of men in general. Even my husband, though he was a good dad – if he raised his voice to Malcolm, Malcolm would become shy and get as stubborn as could be. He never had a fear of men before he went to Templeton.
 - b. It comes down to the abuse he experienced. It is there. It doesn't take much to trigger it off. All it takes is for you to tell them off and Malcolm will lose it.
 - c. He is wary of people; he always takes a second look at staff members when they come into the house. He sums them up quickly.
 - d. The big issue is the constant masturbation which never occurred before he went to Templeton. Both boys wear belts to try and stop them going down there.
 - e. He does remember the abuse, I am sure. Even though he is mainly non-verbal he remembers the day room, saying "put you in the dayroom."
 - f. He is incontinent. He has to wear pads.
- 6.4 The long-term impact on Nigel from his time in Templeton and Brackenridge:
- a. Nigel accepts people coming and going but he still keeps his distance.
 - b. Nigel has night terrors – he gets terrified, and he will get up and shake in the night. It's all from the abuse he suffered.
 - c. Nigel will go off when there is a full moon. He quite often cannot sleep when there is a full moon, and he will be up all night getting himself all worked up.
 - d. He is always worried people will take his food, so he eats compulsively. He was never like that before. He used to eat lovely with a knife and fork. Now he will walk around the room and pick up scraps from people's plates. I was told by a staff member that it was "first up first fed" and the staff let the residents fight for their food.
 - e. Nigel was doing so well with Ms Farrow. He was talking. He was toilet trained. He had manners.
 - f. He is incontinent. All Nigel's toileting went out the window because the bathrooms were locked. He has to wear pads.

7. Effect on me

- 7.1 It's a constant struggle. I have been away a couple of times overseas without them and I felt guilty the entire time. There is always some battle to fight. I train the carers as I know the boys best.
- 7.2 The struggle for adequate funding is constant. I'm underfunded by \$70,000 for paying staff for the boys. The funding was given to Brackenridge through the MOH and Life Links.

8. What I want for them now

- 8.1 It is continuing to put stress on me. I just want the boys to be happy and I'm reaching the end of my life. I don't want all this pressure on my daughter. They just need to be kept an eye on and cared for. I want life to be easy for them. They don't need to deal with funding problems I sorted out years ago.
- 8.2 There is no help for severely autistic people. Autism has been around for over 50 years. Today they still have nothing for older autistic people. Once they turn 17 the Autistic Association doesn't want to know them. There is no housing for them. No staff trained for adults with autism.
- 8.3 The government took the money from the sale of Templeton, and they did not put it back into services and assets.
- 8.4 My boys loved the swimming pool at Templeton. I think they've probably been swimming 3 times in the past 20 years. I used to have one at home, but the earthquake ruined that. There should be a swimming pool somewhere just for the handicapped.
- 8.5 I want better funding. It would have cost the Government a fortune to run Templeton. They sold it and then didn't have to pay those staff. Some of that funding has vanished. It should have gone to the residents.

Statement of Truth

This statement is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and was made by me knowing that it may be used as evidence by the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Abuse in Care.

Signed

GRO-C

Dated:

6/12/2021