

Speaking Notes for Law Amendments Tanning Beds

Introduction

- I am here this evening as the CEO of the Canadian Cancer Society, as a compassionate Nova Scotian and as a mother.
- The mission of the Canadian Cancer Society is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of those living with cancer.
- We know that Nova Scotia has some of the highest rate of cancer in the country and we are investing in research to better understand WHY.
- However, research has informed us on many fronts...
- It is a scientific fact - and indisputable - that exposure to Ultraviolet radiation from the sun and artificial sources pose major public health concerns including the development of melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers.
- Over 80,000 new cases of skin cancers are expected to be diagnosed in Canada this year and over 1,200 Canadians will die.
- The rates of melanoma in Canada have continued to increase every year from 1997 to 2006 and the time for us to come together as a community to reverse this trend is now.

Why take action now?

- Melanoma is the 2nd most common cancer among young adults and is the 8th in cancer mortality.
- Everyday thousands of Canadians and countless Nova Scotians visit indoor tanning salons and it is suspected that a significant number of indoor tanning patrons are under the age of 35.
- This is particularly concerning because recent studies show that those who begin tanning before the age of 35 are **75%** more likely to develop melanoma in their lifetime.
- In 2009, The World Health Organization through its International Agency for Research in Cancer classified tanning beds as 'carcinogenic to humans'.
- This means that it's not *probable* that tanning beds cause cancer - it is *a known fact* that tanning beds cause cancer.
- We know that no tan is a safe tan and that tanned skin is actually a sign of damage sustained by your skin.
- To quote US Congresswoman, Carolyn Maloney, "Tanning beds are the cigarettes of our time: cancer causing and poorly regulated."

- While we deliberate, as a community, about how to manage this public health concern there are Nova Scotians - particularly our youth - who are continuing to engage in this risky behavior and are increasing their risk of developing skin cancer on a daily basis.
- We have an obligation to introduce regulations that we know will positively impact the health - and lives - of Nova Scotians.

The Picture of Cancer in Nova Scotia

- The story of cancer in Nova Scotia is, indeed, a sobering one.
- In 2010, it is anticipated that 6,200 Nova Scotians will be diagnosed with cancer and that 2,750 will die from the disease.
- It is a known fact that Nova Scotians have among the highest rates of cancer in the country. This includes the rates for melanoma skin cancer.
- 250 Nova Scotians will be diagnosed with melanoma skin cancer this year alone and 40 Nova Scotians will die.
- To give you an idea of how this positions Nova Scotia within the rest of Canada, it is expected that there will be 40 cases of melanoma for every 100,000 Nova Scotians compared to 26 cases for every 100,000 Canadians.

- These are statistics. But behind every statistic is a person - another Nova Scotian living with cancer - and I would like to tell you just briefly about one of them.
- Dana Tynski is a 38 year old single mother of three children from Sydney, Cape Breton.
- On January 30th, 2010, she was diagnosed with melanoma skin cancer and life as she knew it changed in an instant.
- One of the first questions her physician asked her the morning he gave her her diagnosis was “do you tan”.
- Although Dana didn’t consider herself an avid tanner she instantly recalled her use of tanning beds and responded ‘yes’.
- What followed Dana’s diagnosis just 11 months ago has been a myriad of doctor’s appointments, surgeries, cancer treatments including self-injections, illness and hope.
- Hope that her life will resume as she knew it and hope that others will be spared from experiencing what she has.
- As Dana explains, “My tan has faded but my scars are very visible and the emotional scars are deep.”

- Dana hoped to be here today to address the committee but she's wasn't feeling up to making the trip from Cape Breton.
- She did want us to share this with you.
- And I quote, "Over and over since I was diagnosed with melanoma, I wished I could turn back time. I wished I had never stepped foot in a tanning bed, that I knew more about melanoma and read more about ultraviolet rays and what they can do. What I really wish is that I wasn't so ignorant to think this couldn't happen to me."
- I share this with you now because statistics are important indicators of how cancer impacts us in Nova Scotia but they are only part of the very real story of cancer for the individual's - and their families - affected by this disease.

The facts are in the research

- The Canadian Cancer Society is funding research to better understand why Nova Scotia has this dubious distinction.
- But research has already given us some answers and it is our shared responsibility to act upon these research findings to protect the health - and lives - of Nova Scotians.
- This is what research tells us:

- Melanoma is the deadliest form of skin cancer.
- Increased exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UV rays) is *the most common* risk factor for melanoma.
- There is conclusive evidence that UV radiation emitted by indoor tanning devices cause skin cancer.
- Any use of an indoor tanning device is associated with an increase (74%) in the risk of melanoma.
- There is a dose dependent increase in melanoma risk, both in terms of the number of hours and the number of sessions a person has used indoor tanning devices. This means that an individual's risk of developing melanoma increases with their use of indoor tanning devices.
- Some studies suggest that people who use tanning beds earlier in life are more likely to become heavy users.
- In fact, there is a growing body of evidence that shows that frequent tanners have been shown to exhibit signs of psychological and physical dependence on indoor tanning and many frequent tanners report difficulty quitting.
- This condition has been called "tanorexia" by many.

- We know that many of you in the room this evening share the goal of the Canadian Cancer Society: to eradicate cancer
- We are confident we can make significant steps forward in fighting skin cancer by supporting the Tanning Bed Act.

An Intolerable Situation

- The indoor tanning industry has grown into a global, multi-billion dollar business often using the message - a mistruth - that tanning beds are safe and that having a tan is both healthy and attractive.
- The claims put forth by the indoor tanning industry have created a false sense of safety for tanning bed patrons and some common misconceptions about the safety of tanning beds amongst the general public.
- There are marketing campaigns that are specifically targeted towards our youth to promote the use of tanning beds. We often see this during prom season.
- Under the Canadian Competition Act, it is illegal for the tanning bed industry to make false claims about the safety and/or health benefits of indoor tanning.

- Lack of regulation of the tanning bed industry has ultimately left Nova Scotians, particularly our youth, vulnerable to the cancer risk related to UV exposure.
- Legislation prohibiting the use of tanning beds for those under the age of 19 sends a strong message to ALL Nova Scotians about the risks associated with indoor tanning devices and it will protect our most vulnerable and impressionable segment of the population, the youth of Nova Scotia.

What we'd like to leave you with

- In closing, I'd like to ask you to think about the health benefits this proposed legislation will bring to Nova Scotians.
- At the Canadian Cancer Society we see on a daily basis the toll cancer takes on an individual, on families and on our communities.
- The eyes of the country are watching Nova Scotia at this moment. We have an exceptionally rare opportunity to 'set the bar' for the rest of Canada when it comes to our legislation around the use of tanning beds.
- We have been here before.
- The Nova Scotia Government was very progressive when it passed a legislation prohibiting the ability to smoke in cars with children and we were the first province in the country to do so.

- The rest of the country followed Nova Scotia's lead because it was legislation that made sense for the protection, health and well-being of Canadians.
- We ask that you act with that same integrity and courageousness now.
- The proposed legislation, 'The Tanning Bed Act', can save lives now and in the future.
- The Canadian Cancer Society strongly supports this legislation and we look forward to its implementation in the near future.

Dana Tynski
59 Coady Street
Sydney, NS
B1S 2S6

November 29th, 2010

Age: 38

Date of diagnosis: January 30th, 2010

Type of diagnosis: 4mm Nodular Melanoma

My name is Dana Tynski, I am the proud mother of three very active children Justin (14 years), Jordan (12 years) and Jillian (10 years). Before I was diagnosed, we spent evenings and weekends at hockey rinks, basketball courts, cheer gyms and going to movies etc. My family, friends and co-workers were in awe of my energy and organization while working full time for Sydney Credit Union. Nothing could keep me away from cheering on my children, nothing until I picked up the phone from my doctors office, I thought my heart stopped.

Early in January 2010, I had two moles removed, one on my upper right leg and one on my upper left thigh/lower buttock (in a place where the sun did not shine). My family doctor sent them off for testing and the mole on my left thigh tested positive for melanoma. It was a 4mm Nodular Melanoma, this is deep for a melanoma. I sat in the doctors office with my mother in disbelief, as he explained that I would need to see a surgeon and a dermatologist and have more tests done (a Cat Scan and a PET scan). I remember answering the doctors questions, and one was, "do you tan?" I never thought of myself as a big tanner, but then recalled that I had been to tanning beds on occasion. I used tanning beds several times to prepare myself for trips to Cuba in 2008 and 2009. These were the first trips I was able to take, as the children were getting older and it was easier to leave them with family. I was scheduled for another trip to Cuba for March 2010, but had to cancel that trip due to my Melanoma Nightmare that I was to face and am still dealing with. It is a big price to pay for the few 8-10 minute sessions that I spent in the tanning beds. And for what, a tan? Was it worth it? Absolutely not! I would rather be as white as Casper the ghost, than go through this again.

My tan has faded but my scars are very visible and the emotional scars are deep. I have not worked since February 18th, 2010. Thank goodness my employer has been so supportive, and is holding my job until I am well enough to return. Since being diagnosed with Melanoma, I see a dermatologist and have had several more moles removed, starting to feel like swiss cheese now. I had my first surgery in March 2010, in Halifax, NS it was performed by Dr. Carmen Giacomantonio, who I contribute my being here alive today. He did a wide excision around the original mole, the surgery was on my upper thigh, lower buttock and looks like a large backward question mark, its about 4-5 inches. The surgeon did an excellent job, but the scar is far less attractive than the tan I was hoping to get from a tanning bed! During the wide excision surgery, they also removed the sentinel node in my groin area for a biopsy to see if the cancer had travelled. To find the sentinel node, they inject a dye with 6 needles around the original mole site and this I found painfully unpleasant. The node was sent to pathology for testing, and again I was left worrying and waiting for results. Unfortunately, I did not get the news I was anticipating, the node tested positive for cancer and I needed to have more surgery.

Back to Halifax, for more surgery. In April 2010, I had an Inguinal Groin dissection (removal of all of the superficial nodes in the left groin area), performed again by Dr. Carmen Giacomantonio my amazing surgeon. For this surgery I was in the hospital over a week to put the recovery time and the extent of the surgery into perspective. I left the hospital after the week with a drain from my stomach into my groin which I had to drain and measure daily. The drain was in 24/7 for several more days and then was removed by the VON nurse that came daily to check the dressing and sutures. It really freaked me out, and I was so glad when it was out.

I thought my Melanoma nightmare was coming to a close, wrong again. I am still going through

treatment. I see Dr. Ron McCormack at the Cape Breton Cancer Centre. Since May of 2010, I have been taking Interferon Alfa 2b, I call it my poison. From May to June, one full month, I went to the C.B. Cancer Centre and they administered the drug through IV Monday through Friday, and it was honestly the hardest thing I have ever done. Each day was harder than the one before, it made me feel so sick, and exhausted. That month is now a blurr, but I do know I missed that full month of my children's life and my own, and it was very hard for them to watch. I finished the month, and just in time because my counts were too low and my body needed a break. I had to go off the Interferon for a week. After the week break, I started giving myself an injections at home, I take it on Monday, Wednesday and Friday until May, 2011, one full year of

treatment. It is now half of the dose that I was taking at the Cancer Centre. I give myself the needle in the stomach, or my right leg. I can't give it in the left leg as the nodes were removed. My left leg is now has a lifetime risk for infection and lymphedema (major swelling). I go for monthly medical massage on the leg and see a physiotherapist weekly to help reduce the risk of lymphedema. I still have swelling in my leg and the left leg measures larger than the right. I wear a full left leg compression stocking from the time I get up in the morning until I go to bed at night. I toss and turn with hot and cold sweats all night, and severe headaches. I have numbness from the knee up in my left leg where muscle and nerves needed to be severed or moved during surgeries. I go for bloodwork weekly because my thyroid is out of whack from the Interferon and to check on my white blood cell count, which also takes a beating from the drug. I have blurred vision at times (photosensitivity) from the drug. I have to stay away from crowds and anyone sick with colds, flu's, etc. because I don't have enough to fight with.

Over and over since I was diagnosed with Melanoma, I wished I could turn back time. I wished I had never stepped foot in a tanning bed, that I knew more about Melanoma, read more about Ultraviolet rays and what they can do, and what I really wish is that I wasn't so ignorant to think this couldn't happen to me, I am dark complected, dark hair, brown eyes and an easy tanner.

So obviously I am a firm believer in banning tanning beds for minors, if it were up to me, I would ban them from all human use. When you actually stop and think about it, it feels like you are in an easy bake oven; would you jump in your oven at home? I would never want someone to go through this, and have to applaud anyone who has.

I would have been glad to make the trip to Halifax and share my story, but I can't just hop in the car and go anymore. I have an appointment today with a surgeon in Sydney today (Nov. 30th) to check a spot around the incision, really it doesn't end. I also have an appointment tomorrow with my excellent physiotherapist (Jackie) at the Cape Breton Regional Hospital.

Some good that has come out of my story, is I am still here to tell it, I know that I am one of the lucky ones. If I can keep anyone from going through this Melanoma nightmare I would. This could be your story if you continue pouring UV rays through your body.

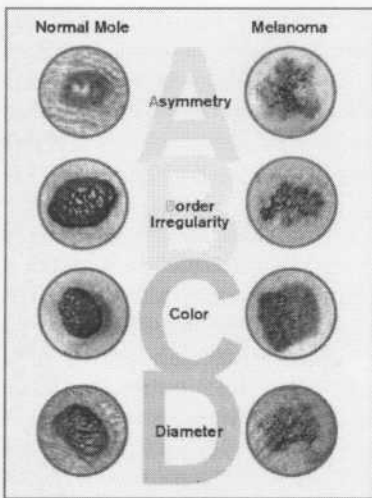
I am also very grateful to my wonderful surgeon, Dr. Giacamantonio, my dermatologist, Dr. Yolanda D'Intino, my oncologist Dr. Ron MacCormack my surgeon in Sydney, Dr. MacMullin and of course to the Cape Breton Cancer Centre, I could never express how much heart they share with patients, they are all wonderful amazing people.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Dana Tynski

These are a couple pictures that I got from |google to give you an idea.

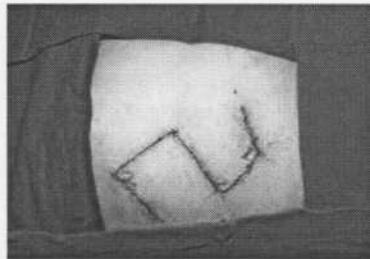


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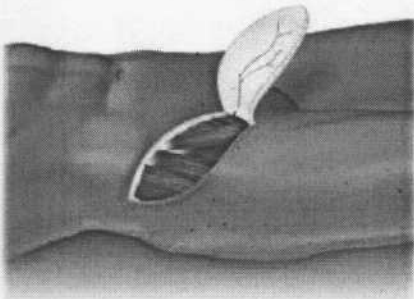
Melanoma



Lymphedema



Wide
Excision



Inguinal Groin Dissection