

Dear Sirs and Madams of the ND Legislator:

Hello, I would like to start by thanking you all for your service in government.

My name is Shaundi Meyer. I have worked in the medical field for 20 years. I feel that in my years of health care work, I have learned a lot, studied more, and always had my ears and eyes open. Wherever I worked, I took it as an opportunity to learn, and I never stopped asking questions. I was a CNA and a Doula (a birthing assistant or coach) when I lived in Oregon. I worked with Certified Nurse Midwives and OB/GYNs. There I studied homeopathy and herbal remedies. I also studied massage and aromatherapy to assist in my work as a Doula. I volunteered to work with addicted moms living in a treatment facility, mothers who had HepC, HepB, and HIV. So I am no stranger to dangerous, infectious diseases. I also completed training for phlebotomy at LCC. We then moved back home to Bismarck. I began working as a phlebotomist at Med Center 1, and continued working there during the whooping cough epidemic in 2004. I began school for Surgical Technology, but an accident in 2005 forced me to drop my courses. I had a complete fracture of my right foot-I tore through 30 ligaments, essentially breaking my foot in half. I had wanted to become a surge tech and hopefully go back to school to become a Critical Care Nurse or work in trauma. But the accident took me off my feet for eight years on and off. After ten surgeries, I was able to get back on my feet. That is when I became an employee at CHI St. Alexius in Bismarck, and have worked there for 7 1/2 years-I started as a CNA, until I injured my shoulder. For the last 6 years I have worked at the switchboard and at the Information Desk. We help a lot of patients, visitors, and staff. As of right now my job is in jeopardy, because my medical exemptions were denied. My doctor wrote both letters on formal letterhead, and included everything they had asked for. The first letter stated due to underlying medical conditions, she was advising against the vaccine. That letter was denied and they demanded a new letter, so she wrote one that said I had anaphylactic responses to the flu vaccine, and it was denied. Both letters are in their third review-every time I get denied I have two weeks to give them more information.

I have worked the frontline from the beginning of this pandemic, and have worked in high-risk exposure situations, so I am no stranger to PPE, and disease. I was told to put a mask on and screen patients and visitors. I was exposed to covid numerous times and I caught covid because CHI St. Alexius did not provide the proper eye gear that would fit over my glasses. The patient had a smokers cough and was not wearing their mask properly when I bent over to hear their question, they coughed into the side of my face-and into my eye. I was told to go to Menards and buy a pair-because they could not give me a pair like Radiology or Surgery would wear (the ones that worked over my glasses) as they claimed they did not have enough. After I came back from having covid, I called Central Supply, told the worker what happened, and I received a pair of eye protection, with a package of extra replacement plastic lenses, that worked over my glasses.

When news came out about a vaccine, my instant reaction-the vaccine would kill me. I am extremely allergic to latex and that the small amount of natural rubber latex in the cap of the vaccine vials would cause an anaphylactic reaction, as I have had before to other medications in the same vials. I was also afraid that my immune system would flare up-I have an autoimmune disorder-arthritis, and a nerve condition called CRPS or by its old name-RSD. My nervous system is in overdrive from an accident years ago, the sympathetic nerves flare up-causing severe pain, tendinitis, temperature changes, swelling, muscle spasms, immobility, and bone loss. Illnesses, stress, and pain or injury all cause flares up. Often times if I'm getting a virus or illness, my nerves and joints flare up first. My fear was that this vaccine would cause my immune system to attack itself, causing my nervous system to attack itself, or to flare up into a Guillén Barres type syndrome. And that fear was validated when I met someone who had the same nerve condition as me and her specialist out East told her not to get this vaccine-it would cause her nervous system to attack itself and shut down, or go into hyperdrive and eventually kill her.

Why do I have these fears-let me explain my other vaccine reactions, and why I believe my vaccines from my youth have caused a lot of the health problems I have now.

I have a lifetime exemption from the flu vaccine due to anaphylactic shock reactions. Although I had an anaphylactic shock response to the regular flu vaccine, I offered to try it without preservatives the next year and I reacted the same way.

When I started working as a phlebotomist at Med Center 1 (now Sanford) I was given a titer for the HepB vaccine. Although I had received this vaccine as a teenager, I had not developed the antibodies. So they gave the series of three shots to me again and we waited. We did another titer-no antibodies. Again I was administered the vaccines. This time though, I developed what they would call complex regional migraines. My co-workers at the time found me confused and lost in the back of the lab. I did not know where or who I was and I was blind in the left eye. The left side of my face was drooping and my left arm was numb. I spent the weekend in the hospital being worked up for strokes, brain tumors, and whatever else they could think to test me for. I had to deal with these “migraines” on and off for two years. When they tested me again-I still hadn’t developed the antibodies. At this time they felt it was enough, and that I probably never would develop the antibodies. Later I would find out that 5-10% of the population does not develop antibodies to vaccines. I would also discover that the symptoms I had directly after the vaccine were considered serious adverse reactions and should have been reported.

When I was six years old I received my vaccines to go to first grade. I developed a fever and a migraine so severe, I can remember it 36 years later. My grandmother gave me a baby aspirin for the fever. Within hours my hands and fingers turned purplish-blue and became so swollen that I could not move them for three days. After the swelling went down, it took weeks before my hands felt normal again, and the pain from the start of the reaction to weeks after was so horrific that I can still remember exactly how it felt today. Since then I have had a reactive type arthritis that causes fever and inflammation when I’m sick or when my body is fighting something. I was a typical tough little farm kid until I had those vaccines. After that “growing pains”, a heightened sensitivity to pain, joint issues, and fevers were a regular part of my life.

I have also felt the discrimination from co-workers, patients and visitors. Many will have no problem telling me that I’m killing them, that I’m the reason covid is still around. These patients and visitors do not know I’m unvaccinated and so it is forgivable and I ignore them, but a co-worker in another department next to where I work does know. And we used to be on the same page-she said numerous times that she agreed with me on the dangers and the mandates. That was until Friday, her supervisor came into my area, and blatantly told me I am not allowed to speak to her staff. I am not allowed to ask them for help with anything, and I will not speak to any of them about “my politics”. This supervisor has had a problem with me since she found out I was against the mandates and against this vaccine. She is nice to my co-workers, both of whom have gotten their vaccines, she jokes and laughs with them. I only get nasty comments and dirty looks from her. I have also been told to get on board with this, because this is the way the world will be. I was full time until hours were cut and I was told to find hours as a greeter/screener. As I fought to get full time hours, with no PTO(I was using it to replace the hours I was losing) I found out my co-workers-both vaccinated-are still getting full time and have 200+hours of PTO each. When the hospital stopped labor pool and bought a tablet to screen people, I was told to get my hours at my other job-while both my co-workers still have full time hours. (The cut in hours for productivity was supposed to be equal to every employee-8 hours each week). This is a complaint that I have fought with them for months now, and this week it will be time to go to HR to start a formal complaint of how I’ve been treated. And perhaps put in my notice.

These mandates are dangerous, not only because of the unknown long term affects of this vaccine, but the short-term and immediate effects are disabling and horrific. These mandates are dangerous, causing people to quit their jobs or have nervous breakdowns-fear of how they will make ends meet. These mandates are dangerous because they are taking away the right of the person to chose what is best for their body and health. These mandates are dangerous because they are a head game-a threat to get everyone to concede to vaccinations. That's what CHI did-they used their survey to get people to answer, they gave religious and medical exemptions-many were denied and got the vaccine because of fear, some of those people are very sick right now. They even developed a new committee to go over the religious exemptions because of the amount they were denying. After all of the-you were denied, we give you two weeks to get us more info, you are denied, two more weeks, denied, two more weeks-but now all of those that got denied can self-test. It is maddening-the back and forth was enough stress to make me physically sick-my health conditions have flared up, and on top of it I'm fighting an ulcer due to all the stress. My job started to become a hostile work environment when this pandemic started-the number of death threats, the incidents of verbal, physical, and emotional abuse that I have dealt with because of the rules of masking and visitation have been astronomical. But today, in my own opinion, my workplace-with the staffing shortages, and with all the traumas and hostilities over the year-it's much worse than a hostile work place. It is not a hospital that receives all as Christ, instead it favors the vaccinated. And has made it apparent that those who fear the vaccine do not get to have a voice.

And finally these mandates are dangerous because if the government can force an experimental, dangerous medicine into its constituents, what is stopping it from complete tyranny? It is not the job of the government to decide what should be decided between a doctor and a patient. Please consider this in your voting today. If vaccines can harm me this much, and the injuries I have seen-what could happen to you, to your loved one, to your child if the vaccine is forced upon them? I pray those that got the vaccine have no side effects, no adverse reactions, and I pray that they understand why I would not want to risk my health or my family's wellbeing for an experimental shot.

My prayers are with you all, and I pray that our voices-the voices of your constituents would be heard. We do not want these mandates, and after all of the months that we spent taking care of the sick, all of the families that I escorted to the rooms of dying patients, all the people I comforted and gave love too, it was not for nothing, it was what I, what we were called to do, to step up and love and care for the sick. And for the last almost two years we all did it without an experimental vaccine, we did not kill anyone, we only accepted all as Christ-we did our job as healthcare workers, and we did it well. Often times on little sleep and without breaks, with fear in the back of our minds-for our own families and loved ones. But we still did it and are still willing too-if we are allowed too.

In Christ,
Shaundi Marie Meyer proud North Dakota and Patriot Mama