

**Standing Committee on  
Veterans Affairs**



CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES  
HOUSE OF COMMONS  
CANADA

**Comité permanent des  
anciens combattants**

Friday, November 18, 2016

The Honourable Jane Philpott, P.C., M.P.  
Minister of Health  
70 Colombine Driveway  
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0K9

Dear Minister,

On Thursday, November 3, 2016, the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, in considering the testimony it has heard thus far during its study of mental health and suicide prevention among veterans, unanimously agreed to request that your department examine the effects of the anti-malaria drug mefloquine in greater detail.

The text of the motion that was adopted reads as follows:

*“That the Chair write to the Minister of Health, requesting that the effects of the anti-malaria drug Mefloquine be examined in greater detail; that the letter be posted publicly on the Committee’s website; and that the Minister of National Defence, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and the Chair of the Standing Committee on Health be copied on the letter.”*

Accordingly, I write to you in my capacity as Chair in order to bring forward the concerns raised with regard to the historic and continuing use of mefloquine as an anti-malarial prophylaxis.

It is our intent to move forward with our study into a broader scope and other specific issues affecting the mental health and wellness of veterans and their families; however, I wanted to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the evidence presented to this committee on the subject of mefloquine. During our first three meetings, the Committee heard testimony from Veterans, researchers and medical professionals. Chief among the concerns raised were the topics of adverse neuropsychiatric reactions, questions over labelling and prescribing practices, paucity of empirical and peer reviewed scientific evidence concerning neurotoxicity and difficulties in finding potential treatment plans for those that may have persistent and lasting adverse symptomology that could potentially be linked to the use of mefloquine.

I would ask you to consider the testimony given to our committee on mefloquine with the wellness of our Armed Forces members, Veterans and Canadians as a whole in mind. The relevant testimony from the Committee's first three meetings is attached for your review. You can also consult the testimony the Committee has heard so far in light of its study on the Committee's website.

Yours sincerely,



Neil R. Ellis, M.P.

Chair of the Standing Committee for Veterans Affairs

cc: The Honourable Harjit Sajjan, P.C., M.P., Minister of National Defence  
The Honourable Kent Hehr, P.C., M.P., Minister of Veterans Affairs  
Bill Casey, M.P., Chair of the Standing Committee on Health