

Inquest law from 1900 needs update, says lawyer for inmate's mother

Heather Locke denied official standing in coroner's inquest into 2010 death of son, Glen Wareham

By Alan White, [CBC News](#) Posted: Oct 18, 2016 8:30 AM AT Last Updated: Oct 18, 2016 10:15 PM AT



Heather Locke testified Monday at a coroner's inquest into the death of her son in 2010. (CBC)

New Brunswick's legislation for coroner's inquests is outdated and should be revisited, says the lawyer for the mother of an inmate whose 2010 death is now being examined at a coroner's inquest in Moncton.

Heather Locke made a request Monday at the coroner's inquest headed by chief coroner Gregory Forestell for standing, which would give her the right to call and examine her own witnesses, to cross-examine witnesses and make submissions to the coroner and the jury.

Forestell denied the request by Locke, who is the mother for Glen Edward Wareham, who was an inmate at the Shepody Healing Centre in Dorchester when he died in 2010 from complications from self-harm.

The Shepody Healing Centre is a Correctional Service of Canada facility for prisoners with mental health issues.



Lawyer Meaghan Daniel says New Brunswick is unique in Canada in not allowing families to participate in inquests into the death of a loved one. (CBC)

Meaghan Daniel, who is Locke's lawyer, said New Brunswick "is actually unique in Canada that families can not participate in inquests."

The legislation on which Forestell's denial is based was adopted in 1900, she noted.

"We believe that the court should revisit this," said Daniel.

"The principles of natural justice and the Constitution would allow for effective participation by families at inquest."

'We believe that the court should revisit this.' - Meaghan Daniel, lawyer for Heather Locke

Daniel noted the family of Moncton native Ashley Smith was given standing in the Ontario coroner's inquest into her 2007 death in the prison system.

"The effect of their participation was enormous," said Daniel.

"The inquest went from a hearing that was just looking into the very last institution that she was incarcerated in . . . to looking at her entire year of incarceration," she said.

"The meaning between that shorter inquest and that longer inquest meant Canadians learned about the treatment Ashley faced.

"It changed the verdict from what could have been a verdict of accident or unknown, to a verdict of homicide, which is what the family put forward," said Daniel.

"Heather should have been able to have this same access to participate."