

Witness Name: Christine Harrington

Statement No.: WITN4050001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 23/7/20

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CHRISTINE HARRINGTON

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 19 June 2020.

I, Christine Harrington, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My date of birth is GRO-C 1954. My professional qualifications are Certificate in Education, 1975; Registered General Nurse, 1981; Diploma in Adult Counselling, 1993; MSc in Nursing, 2008.
2. Between 1981 and 1982, I was a staff nurse on a general medical ward at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington. Between 1982 and 1983, I was a staff nurse at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery in London. Between 1983 and 1984, I was a staff nurse at Atkinson Morley's Hospital, London completing the ENB course 148 in Neuromedical and Neurosurgical Nursing. Between 1984 and 1986, I was a ward sister on the Neurosurgical Unit at the National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery.
3. From 1986 to 1995, I was clinical nurse specialist at the Haemophilia Centre, St Thomas's Hospital, London. From 1995 to 2004, I was clinical nurse manager on the Katharine Dormandy Haemophilia Centre & Thrombosis Unit,

at the Royal Free Hospital, London. From 2004, I was nurse consultant in haemophilia at the same unit. I retired in 2014.

4. Between 1991 and 1996, I was a trustee of the Macfarlane Trust. Between 2002 and 2007, I was a nurse representative on the Haemophilia Alliance. Between 2002 and 2008, I was a member of the Pan-Thames Haemophilia Consortium, Expert Advisory Group. Between 2003 and 2008, I was a member of the UKHCDO Genetics Working Group. Between 2002 and 2010, I was chair of the UK Haemophilia Nurses' Association. Between 2010 and 2014, I was chair of the nurses' committee of the European Association for Haemophilia and Allied Disorders.

Section 2: Responses to criticism of W1791

1. Witness W1791 was a patient of the haemophilia centre at the Royal Free Hospital. I started working at the Royal Free haemophilia centre in 1995 and I retired 6 years ago. As W1791 acknowledges in his statement, he attended the centre infrequently, and therefore, over the years, I met him on relatively few occasions. I was aware that he was reluctant to come to the centre. I did actively try to engage with him and get to know him when the opportunity arose. Generally, this meant passing conversations, outside the consulting room.
2. A few years ago, he took up my offer of a nursing review. He had not been reviewed for a long time, and needed a review to continue on the home-treatment programme. The review was arranged specially, outside the usual appointment system. I cannot remember the date, but I think it was less than 10 years ago. To the best of my memory, we discussed only clinical matters connected with his haemophilia. I arranged the necessary blood tests. I thought that he would benefit from physiotherapy and actively encouraged him to make an appointment for a full multidisciplinary team review, which I think he did.
3. That was my only formal meeting in a clinic with W1791. To the best of my memory, I was never involved in a multidisciplinary assessment of him but, on

a few occasions, I may have taken blood samples and administered treatment to him.

4. I did have a number of informal conversations with W1791. These took place in passing, often in the corridor. I would make general enquiries about how he was. As he became involved with campaigning for an inquiry, this was often what he would choose to talk about.
5. W1791 felt that something had gone badly wrong with his haemophilia care which had led to his infection. He felt we were all part of it. Over the years his trust in the team was lost. He came across as quite angry. However, he seemed quite friendly towards me, and I thought we had a reasonable relationship. I always sought to be honest with him, and not to avoid him.
6. I have been asked to respond to 2 passages in W1791's witness statement.
7. In paragraph 14, W1791 says:

'The moment I questioned the doctors about anything, you could tell that they absolutely hated it. They either became very defensive or would just make up lies. Now that we know the truth of a lot of what happened, it is even more apparent that they were lying to us. This was not just one or two medical professionals who treated us this way, it was systemic; the likes of [GRO-B] [GRO-B] Christine Harrington and Christine Lee were all the same. I believe they were deliberately dismissive towards us when we asked questions in order to deter us from asking more.'
8. I did not feel defensive with W1791. I thought that he was all right with me. I was aware that he was reluctant to be in the centre and was always rushing off. I would try to engage him in some sort of conversation, though these conversations never lasted long. When the subject of the campaign for an inquiry came up, I did not avoid this subject.
9. As time went on, W1791 became angrier and angrier, and it was quite hard to engage with him in fleeting conversations. I wanted to understand W1791's

concerns and was not aware of ever dismissing them. I am very sorry if it ever appeared that way.

10. I do not remember witness W1791 asking me any questions relevant to the terms of reference of this inquiry. If he did, I might not have known the answer. I never knowingly avoided or dismissed any of his questions. I never told W1791 a lie.
11. In paragraph 18, W1791 says:

'A few years ago, when I was talking to Christine Harrington at the Royal Free, she told me that Professor Christine Lee had a lot to answer for. The next time I went and found her and pulled her up on it, she panicked and backtracked. She asked me not to repeat what she had said to anyone and said she would deny it if I did.'
12. I remember a conversation that took place in the treatment supplies room. W1791 talked about his hopes for an inquiry. I said that, should an inquiry happen, we would probably all be involved in some way, and need to answer questions. I think he said words to the effect of, 'Including Professor Lee?' and I replied, 'Yes, all of us. We would all need to answer questions.'
13. On a subsequent visit, he said something that led me to believe that he had misunderstood what I said, and believed that I had expressed the opinion that Professor Lee in particular would have questions to answer. I told him that this was not what I had said. I remember saying, 'I didn't say that.' I believed that he had accepted this at the time, and was not alarmed. I did not feel the need to make a record of this conversation, and forgot about it for years.
14. In the first conversation, I did not say that Professor Lee 'had a lot to answer for', but only that we would all need to answer questions. I only meant that everything would be examined, if there were an inquiry. I very much regret any misunderstanding.

5. In the 2nd conversation, I did not panic or back-track. I thought that I had cleared up the misunderstanding. I did not ask witness W1791 not to repeat what I had said, or that I would deny it if he did.

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true.

Signed GRO-C

Dated 23 JULY 2020