



Witness

Name: David White

Statement No.:

WITN0264001

Exhibits:

WITN0264002 - 5

Dated: 19 October 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAVID MICHAEL WHITE

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 01 October 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, David Michael White, will say as follows: -

Introduction

1. My name is David Michael White. My address and date of birth are known by the Inquiry. I was a Warehouse and Ramp Manager at Heathrow Airport until I retired, following an accident at work, in 1988. Due to the various cancers I have had since my retirement I have been unable to return to work.

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How Infected

2. In 1988, following my accident at work, I was diagnosed with chondrosarcoma of the right hip and femur and I was referred to the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore for my treatment. As part of my treatment I had an operation on my hip and femur which was described by the doctors at the time as a particularly bloody operation. As a result, I received 12 pints of blood while I was on the table. Throughout the rest of my treatment I received at least another 20 pints of blood. The transfusions made me feel a lot better.

2.1. Although I have had numerous other cancers I have never needed a subsequent blood transfusion. I have never been an intravenous drug user and while I do have a couple of tattoos they significantly predate my Hepatitis C infection. As a result, I believe I was infected with Hepatitis C in 1988 by a blood transfusion.

2.2. I was not expressly told that I would need a blood transfusion during my treatment. I was therefore, never told that there would be any risk of infection. At the time, despite being a regular blood donor, I did not realise that blood was literally taken from people and put in a fridge and you just received it straight from the fridge. I thought that it would have been tested.

2.3. Following my treatment in 1988 I just came home and carried on thinking that everything was fine. I did not find out that I had Hepatitis C until 22 years later.

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- 2.4. In November 2011 I received a phone call from my doctor asking me to come into the surgery. He informed me that I had a positive HCV antibody in my blood. I had Hepatitis C genotype 2. He had found this out because the Health Protection Agency had sent him a letter concerning my positive result.
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- 2.5. During that initial appointment with my doctor I was given a leaflet about Hepatitis C. I remember that he had written my name across the top. He also gave me some information about being careful not to infect others but I wasn't provided with any other particular advice.
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- 2.6. I was referred to the Royal Surrey hospital and in 2012 I started to go to the liver clinic where I received liver scans. I had cirrhosis of one side of my liver.
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- 2.7. I read up about the available treatment options and at the time the treatment available was Interferon. I wouldn't accept Interferon because I knew of the side effects. My consultant also didn't recommend that I have interferon for two reasons. Firstly, because he didn't believe that it would work and secondly, he was also concerned about the side effects. When I saw the hepatitis nurse she told me that if I was her dad she would not let me take Interferon.
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- 2.8. I believe that I should have been told about the infection earlier. I do not understand how I wasn't diagnosed earlier as I have had a significant number of blood tests. For example, In 1998 I contracted clostridium which I picked up in Stanmore Hospital, I was having numerous blood tests for that. I don't know if it would have made any difference if I

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were told earlier as there were no acceptable treatment options available but I would still have liked to have been told.

Other Infections

3. I have not had any other Hepatitis C related health problems, nor do I believe that I received any other infection from my blood transfusion. Throughout my life I have had numerous cancers and I have always wondered whether any of these were a result of my blood transfusions. I understand that no one knows the answer to this question and I will probably never know myself.

3.1 I have given the Investigators a copy of the handwritten list of cancers – on a page entitled 'History'. It also shows the medication I currently take and my allergies. A photograph of this page is exhibited as **WITN0264002**.

Consent

4. As I have said, I was not expressly told that I was going to have a transfusion and was not warned about any risk of infection. I do not know when I was tested for Hepatitis C and was not specifically aware that I was being tested for Hepatitis C. However, due to various health problems I was having numerous blood tests at that time. I do not believe that my blood has been tested for anything that I did not consent to.

Impact

5. I was shocked when I first found out that I had

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Hepatitis C. I was particularly shocked because I did not know how I had got the infection. I thought that it might have been something that I picked up from the hospital. Once I found out that it was as a result of a blood transfusion I was annoyed. I was particularly annoyed that they used to import all of the blood from America and that they used to take it from the prisons because the prisons got paid. I wonder if they knew about the risks and the infections.

5.1. At first I was worried about hepatitis and felt a lot of stigma in having to tell people. For me the stigma has been the biggest issue. There is also stigma attached to the liver cirrhosis. Previously my doctor blamed drinking for my cirrhosis despite the fact that I don't drink. He used to make jokes about curbing my drinking.

5.2. Although I have Cirrhosis I have never had any pain or anything from the Hepatitis C. I just carried on and although I was gutted that I had it I don't think that it affected me that much.

5.3. As I was advised not to, and didn't want to take, Interferon I have only recently received treatment. I began Mavyret on 7 February 2018. I had an 8 week course of tablets and I think that I took 3 tablets a day. I didn't experience any side effects, it was brilliant. There is a long list of potential side effects but I just carried on as normal and they didn't affect me.

5.4. When I first started taking the Mavyret I had to take a lower dose of Lansoprazole for Barrett's oesophagus that I suffer but I don't believe that it had a significant impact. I was able to stay on my other medications including the

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antibiotics that I will have to take for the rest of my life.

5.5. Since having the Mavyret I have had two blood tests saying that I am clear of Hepatitis C. I have another blood test scheduled in the first week of January 2019. Mavyret is a new drug, I believe that it only stopped being trialed the August before I received it. Because it is a new drug the doctors don't know what will happen after those three blood tests. It is possible that the Hepatitis C will come back.

5.6. My wife was worried about it when I was told that I had hepatitis C and my children were shocked. I have told my family and I tell medical professionals but it is not something that I share more widely. I have to tell people each time I have a blood test and I have a lot of blood tests. I have been to hospital 27 times so far this year alone for a variety of medical conditions including prostate cancer.

5.7. When I cut myself I am very careful not to let my family members, particularly my wife, help me as I do not want to infect anyone else. I have had to be worried about infecting others.

5.8. I used to be a blood donor but I can't do that now. As I had already had to retire for medical reasons I did not have to give up work because of the Hepatitis C infection and there have been no significant financial effects other than the costs of hospital visits.

Treatment/Care/Support

6. I did not receive immediate treatment for hepatitis C for reasons I have already outlined above. I have never been refused a treatment and I

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was given Mavyret very quickly after it became available.

- 6.1. I have never been offered counselling or emotional support but I have never asked for it. I do not believe that I have ever needed it and would not have accepted it.

Financial Assistance

7. I was told in 2011 that I had Hepatitis C but I was not made aware of the Skipton Fund until 2013. I was really surprised that there was any kind of compensation scheme available. My doctor said to me, as a throw away comment at the end of my appointment, that I might want to look into the Skipton Fund. I would not otherwise have known that any help was available.
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- 7.1. I asked for my medical records and it was a bit of a palaver but I didn't really have any problems getting the records. I got my records from Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in relation to the original transfusions but I do not have my full medical record.
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- 7.2. I applied to the Skipton Fund in late 2013 and was granted compensation in 2014. I received a payment of £20,000. I have the forms and know how to claim for the next level of compensation but I do not qualify. In addition to the one off payment I also get approximately £330 a month. I get letters quarterly informing me of how much I am going to receive and whether there have been any significant changes in the way the payment scheme is run.
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Other Issues

8. I am very happy with the treatment I received from the hospitals and have no qualms with any of them. They were all brilliant.

8.1 The investigators have also taken 3 photographs of separate pages from my medical notes, the 1st details the initial blood transfusion in 1988 this is exhibited as **WITN0264003**. The next 2 pages I believe give the batch numbers of the transfusions I received, these are exhibited as **WITN0264004 & WITN0264005**

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated

2/11/2018.

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