



Witness Name: Richard Gilmour
Statement No.: WITN0455001
Exhibits:
Dated: 11 October 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF RICHARD GILMOUR

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 09 October 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, Richard Gilmour, will say as follows: -

Introduction

1. My name is Richard Gilmour. My date of birth and address are known to the Inquiry. I was divorced in 2012 which was before my diagnosis, at this time I live alone. I intend to speak about my infection of Hepatitis C which I contracted from a blood transfusion in 1974. In particular the nature of my illness and how the illness affected me, the treatment I received and the impact it had on me and my family.

How Infected

2. I left school at the age of 16, the year was 1974. I went to work in a carpet factory called Templeton's carpet factory. There was not much in the way of health and safety. I was working on a cropper machine when my right arm got caught in the machinery. I was rushed to Victoria Infirmary hospital and they carried out a degloving operation. My Father (who has passed away) told me that he had to give consent for the operation.
 - 2.1. Part of the degloving operation required a blood transfusion. I can remember lying in bed with tubes in my right arm from a stand, one was clear and one was red, it obviously had blood in it. I can also

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remember the bags had blood in them. I was lucky that I did not lose my arm. I was in hospital for a few weeks and received a skin graft.

- 2.2. After leaving hospital, I went to work after 3 weeks. I was worried I wouldn't get my job back. Templeton's reassured me that there was a job there on my return and I also got £1000 in compensation. Templeton's were a renowned carpet factory for 100 years but they have now closed down.
- 2.3. I then worked for Scottish Power for 19 years. I also signed up for the Territorial Army.
- 2.4. In 1985 I found a lump which was on my neck/throat. This became a haematoma. I went to Victoria Infirmary. I lost a lot of blood and when they opened it up, everything came out.
- 2.5. On 31 August 1998, I went to Monklands in Airdrie for a neck operation. The lump on my neck was swelling up and I was struggling to breath. The Doctor came in to examine me. I remember he was shining a torch down my throat, I couldn't breath and he ended up doing an emergency tracheotomy.
- 2.6. At this time I needed a transfusion. I remember lots of tubes, one went into my throat to help me to breath but there was one which I think was for blood. Monklands were pretty good, they got me back in for counselling because it was so scary. I think I nearly died.
- 2.7. On 19 December 2001, I went to Monklands because another haematoma developed on the back of my neck. I went there to get it cut off.
- 2.8. On 13 April 2004 the lump on the back of my neck reappeared and this time I went to Gartnavel Hospital. There I was told I could have it removed but there was a possibility of the operation not working properly and it might have left me with a disability. I did not want to take the chance and I refused the operation.
- 2.9. I had been living in Perth but after splitting up with my wife I came back to Glasgow. In June 2013, I moved to see a GP at Rutherglen Surgery. The GP there did some blood tests on me and diagnosed me with Hepatitis C. He then referred me to Gartnavel General Hospital where a Dr Fox did further tests and he also told me that I had Hepatitis C, Type 1, Genotype 3.
- 2.10. When I was first told about the infection, the Doctor asked me if I had promiscuous sex, if I had taken drugs or if I had any tattoos. My answer to all of this was no. I think it was Dr Fox that asked me if I had had any blood transfusions and I told him about the one I had when I injured my arm in 1974. He said there is a possibility that I was

given infected blood. I was not really told much about the infection itself.

- 2.11. The Doctors made every effort that I would not pass it on. They gave me condoms. They told me things about keeping toothbrushes and razor blades a part and to be very careful if I cut myself.
- 2.12. I think they knew about my infection earlier than when I was told. I think they knew something was wrong but how can I prove that. Obviously they should have told me as soon as they knew.
- 2.13. Although the Doctors were pretty good with some of the advice around passing the infection on, I still felt dumbfounded that I wasn't told about any of the support groups. I just went home. It was only following the Penrose inquiry that I found out that other people were infected the same way as me.

Other Infections

3. As far as I am aware, the only infection I have contracted at any time is Hepatitis C.

Consent

4. Since I have been diagnosed with my infection I have always been told when and why medical staff are taking blood from me. I am not aware of them treating or testing me without my knowledge.
- 4.1. When I went into hospital in 1974 because of my arm injury, because of my age, my Father was needed to give consent, which he did. I had conversations with my Father around this, and he never mentioned anyone warning him of possible risks of the blood being infected.

Impact

5. My main issue, with having been infected with Hepatitis C, is that mentally it never leaves me. I never stop thinking about it. It is always on my mind.
- 5.1. Physically, I have chronic fatigue, I am always tired.
- 5.2. I think that the following medical complications have resulted from my infection. I have had haematomas, kidney stones, blood clots, a stomach hernia, constant dizziness from low blood pressure and complications with my liver. My Doctor said I have cirrhosis of the

liver. I still have 6 monthly liver assessments, my last scan was 6 weeks ago, I will receive these results on the 29 October 2018.

- 5.3. In 2014, the Doctors treated me with tablets to help with my infection. There were two tablets, one big one, one small one. One was called ribavirin. We tried this for 12 weeks but it did not seem to help, nothing happened.
- 5.4. My liver appeared to be deteriorating, I had a liver stiffness score of over 15 which qualified me for another drug, this new drug was very expensive.
- 5.5. I do not know the name of the new drug but the treatment consisted of interferon injections plus two tablets, one of which was ribavirin and the other I presume was the new drug. I stayed on this until the end of 2014 and on being tested was told that I was clear of Hepatitis C. I have continued my check ups and about a year ago I was told I was still clear of Hepatitis C.
- 5.6. I did not face any difficulties or obstacles in getting any treatment.
- 5.7. To be honest, at the time I was unaware of any other treatments that were available to me. I can't remember anyone mentioning any other further treatments that I could have had.
- 5.8. Following my interferon treatment, I found that tiredness became worse and worse. I have noticed that in the last few years I can hardly get out of bed, my legs just feel like lead.
- 5.9. I have been asked how my infected status has impacted upon other medical and dental care. As far as my dental treatment goes, I did tell them I had Hepatitis C and there were no issues.
- 5.10. As far as my continuing medical care goes, I did not feel like I was treated differently. The hospital staff have always been very nice, especially at the Gartnavel.
- 5.11. I do find it uncomfortable when I am with other people infected with Hepatitis C in the hospital. I find that I have to keep telling the staff that I was infected with the virus through a blood transfusion and not through taking drugs.
- 5.12. Since my diagnosis, I have met a new partner. We have been together for about 4 and half years. However, I have not told her about my infection.
- 5.13. I still regularly see my kids, they are grown up, I have told them

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- 5.14. The only other person that I have told apart from medical staff is my best pal and my sister.
- 5.15. I have spoken with a reporter from the Scottish Daily Mail, anonymously. I can't remember when this was or how I came to speak with him.
- 5.16. There was a stigma around this whole business of Hepatitis C. Everybody thinks it is related to drug users and people that are having promiscuous sex. I think people would then be talking about you behind your back, so I just feel like people don't need to know. Because of this stigma, I find it hard to talk about which is probably why I have never mentioned this to my partner.
- 5.17. As far as the infection impacting on my education goes, I left school at 16 and never wished to go further academically.
- 5.18. It did not stop me getting a job, I have worked all my life. Although financially it has impacted on me. I have worked as a taxi driver for the last 20 years and when I become too tired, I can't work. I can't do the same hours as I did before. I do need to get the money but I can't physically do it.
- 5.19. This obviously impacts on my children, had I been able to work more hours and claim more pay I could have given them so much more.

Treatment/Care/Support

6. I was never offered any counselling or physiological support to help me when I was infected with the virus.

Financial Assistance

7. I have received payments from Trusts which I will lay out below. I also get £6000 a year private pension from Scottish Power.
 - 7.1. As I have said I had no idea with regards to support schemes, trusts, and funds that were available to me because I had been given contaminated blood. It was Dr Fox who told me about the Skipton Fund. I filled out a form and took it to Dr Fox who completed it and sent it off to the Skipton Fund.
 - 7.2. They actually refused this application and told me that I had to find more evidence of this transfusion. Dr Fox and I tried to get my records of the operation on my arm and the transfusion.

- 7.3. The Skipton Fund also wrote back asking if I was PCR or RNA, I don't know what these mean. Because Dr Fox couldn't get my medical records having been told that they had been destroyed. He then had to again confirmed my status.
- 7.4. I had appealed the Skipton Fund's decision not to pay me and following the information sent from Dr Fox, they decided that they would pay. They said that they were satisfied that is more likely than not that your infection from qualifying NHS treatment and accordingly allowed the appeal. The letter was signed off by Mark Mildren (chair of appeal panel).
- 7.5. The Skipton Fund then paid me £20,000 in January 2014. There were no preconditions to this payment.
- 7.6. This procedure took about 3 months, I found my dealings with the Skipton Fund quite slow. I needed to make phone calls to move it along. I found them not very helpful.
- 7.7. I then applied for a stage 2 payment from the Skipton Fund in 2016, but this was refused because they argued around the levels of stiffness of my liver.
- 7.8. There had been correspondence between the hospitals and the Skipton Fund which showed my liver readings. Two of which showed my readings as high as 14.5 kpa and 15 kpa however there was a lower reading at a later time of 7.5 kpa. They have appeared to take the lowest reading, and because of that they told me that I did not reach the criteria for the payment. The reason being that my liver had not deteriorated enough according to them.
- 7.9. Three years ago, I got an extra £30K from the Scottish Government. Also, I have received £500 as a winter fuel allowance from the Scottish Infected Blood Scheme (SIBS). This annual payment is now £1000.
- 7.10. I have quite strong views about the payment procedures, firstly why was nobody allowed to attend the appeals at the Skipton Fund. I feel everybody is equal that there should not be a stage 1 or a stage 2, who invented this measurement?
- 7.11. I feel discriminated against. Everybody was infected the same way, it is wrong, everyone should be paid the same amount of money and there should be no stages. The categories should be 'infected' or 'Not infected' not stage 1 or stage 2.

Other Issues

8. I have been asked if I was legally represented, I am a member of the Scottish Infected Blood Forum and because of that I was sent forms

from Thompsons Solicitors but I have not filled these out. I am not legally represented.

8.1. I have been asked if I would like to put any questions to the Inquiry. Have they looked at the records from the Scottish Blood Transfusion Service? There may be evidence from the 1970s showing where the infected blood came from. Was it tested? Where was it tested? How did they carry out the tests? Also why was this blood not screened when it came into the country? Why were the pharmaceutical companies not screening the blood? There were so many opportunities to screen the blood.

8.2. Ignorance isn't an excuse.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 11/10/2018

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