

Witness Name: Jacqueline Nation

Statement No.: WITN0545001

Exhibits:

Dated: 27/11/2018

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FINAL WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE NATION

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 26<sup>th</sup> October 2018.

I, Jacqueline Nation, will say as follows: -

#### **1. Introduction**

1. My name is Jacqueline Nation.  
My date of birth and address are known to the Inquiry.  
I am the mother of 2 (now adult) children and now live alone.  
I was a nurse in the NHS for over 40 years working in a variety of positions, most recently working in infectious diseases. I am now retired from nursing, but still work part-time in the NHS.
2. I intend to speak about my mother Teresa Munn, aged 61 years at the time of her death in 1995. She died at Good Hope Hospital, Sutton Coldfield. Her death certificate (dated 18/02/1995) lists cause of death as:
  - a) Hepatic encephalopathy
  - b) Cryptogenic cirrhosisThere is no reference to Hepatitis C infection on the death certificate.

## **2. How Affected**

3. My mother & I had been told of the Hepatitis C diagnosis by the Consultant treating her at Good Hope Hospital (Dr Hillenbrand); he explained the Hepatitis C infection had been contracted through a blood transfusion. Being a nurse I was aware of Hepatitis C but related it at that time to intravenous drug use only and was therefore extremely shocked. My mother was confused because she associated liver disease with excessive alcohol consumption and as she only ever had an occasional alcoholic drink just couldn't understand why she had this infection. We were told there wasn't really any treatment and little further information was given.
4. My mother was exposed to potentially infected blood on 3 occasions: during emergency surgery following an ectopic pregnancy in 1976 at Birmingham General Hospital and during elective renal surgeries in 1985/86 and around 1993 at Good Hope Hospital.
5. My mother was under the care of a Consultant (Dr Hillenbrand) at Good Hope Hospital, Sutton Coldfield. She had a nephrectomy due to a staghorn renal stone in 1985/86 and then required surgery to the remaining kidney in around 1993. She had thought her poor health was due to renal problems following these surgeries and often became upset because her health continued to deteriorate. She complained of abdominal pain, distended abdomen which was very uncomfortable and continually feeling very weak and tired.
6. The Hepatitis C infection had caused liver cirrhosis which in turn led to ascites causing her pain / discomfort and distress. She had loved cups of tea – sitting with a pot of tea was her favourite pastime, but due to the ascites she was instructed to limit her fluid intake and the only treatment she received in relation to the Hepatitis (as far as I know / can remember) was high doses of diuretics prescribed to control the ascites and analgesia.

7. The Consultant had told my mother in late 1994 that the only treatment available would be a liver transplant and advised he would refer her to the Liver Specialist at Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham. No communication was received from Queen Elizabeth Hospital either before or after her death.
  
8. My mother was widowed and lived alone.  
My mother and I were not told of the Hepatitis C infection until my mother had severe liver cirrhosis and within a couple of months I was advised she was terminally ill. (I have 2 brothers to whom I relayed information but they were not involved in hospital appointments). As a consequence of not being aware of the Hepatitis C diagnosis the family believed that her continual illness, symptoms and decline in health were the result of her kidney impairment but this was most probably not the case. I personally feel I could have provided more adequate care and ensured she suffered less had I have known of the correct diagnosis earlier.
  
9. At the time of my mother illness / death I was 39 years old with 2 young children (aged 3 & 5 years). I was working part-time as a Community Nurse.  
I had a very close relationship with my mother, visiting her with the children several times a week. Prior to becoming ill, she loved to spend time with the children and often helped out with child care

### **3. Other Infections**

When my mother and I were advised of the Hepatitis C infection we were also told there was evidence of a recent Hepatitis A infection.

### **4. Consent**

10. Testing was carried out due to deranged liver function results and symptoms related to liver cirrhosis. As far as I know, my mother was given no information prior to testing.

## **5. Impact**

11. Due to her illness she was continually in pain / discomfort, she could no longer travel to visit me at my home or help out with the child care and in fact she felt so poorly she found it difficult to have my children about (she was also terrified she would pass on the infection to the children); this was very distressing for her, myself and my young children who just couldn't understand why grandma didn't want to see them. Finding care for my children so that I could visit my mother alone was challenging and at a difficult time this exacerbated the sadness of the situation. My mother had not wanted to burden me, being fully aware of my commitments with the children and hadn't told me she was experiencing both urinary and faecal incontinence for a few days before being admitted to hospital for palliative care and had struggled to self care.
12. At the end of her life my mothers' ability to socialise was severely restricted, she had become severely jaundiced, she was embarrassed, wouldn't allow anyone to visit her and she became very isolated and lonely.

## **6. Treatment/Care/Support**

13. At the time in my life when my mother was ill and died I very much needed help and support from her and I naturally felt very angry about her illness / death, especially knowing that it was caused by an infected blood transfusion. I felt guilty that I wasn't able to spend more time with

her and when I discovered the problems she'd been having leading up to her admission to hospital, I felt I had let her down in the final days of her life. I subsequently received counselling to help me deal with my grief and feelings of guilt.

- 14. Obviously my children have grown up without their grandma, my daughter who was 5 when my mother died remembers her but my son who was only just 3 at the time has no recollection of her. I find this very sad.

### **7. Financial Assistance**

- 15. My mother was in receipt of Disabled Living Allowance but received no specific financial support.

### **8. Other Issues**

17.

### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed                       
**GRO-C**

Dated 27<sup>th</sup> November 2018