

Witness Name: Charles Robert Rees

Statement No: WITN0997001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 5th June 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF CHARLES ROBERT REES

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 21 May 2019.

I, Charles Robert Rees, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Charles Robert Rees. My date of birth is GRO-C 1945 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I worked as a doctor in the National Health Service (NHS) from 1970 to 2017. I was a Partner from 1972 to 1978, and Senior Partner from 1978 to 2010 in Penny's Hill Practice.
2. I intend to speak about my former patient and friend, Rodney Prosser, and the circumstances in which he became infected with the Hepatitis C ("HCV") virus.

Section 2: How Infected

3. Rodney Prosser was a patient and a friend. Being young in 1986, he rarely came to me as a patient. However, we played football together for the Ferndown Fluids and Charlie's Angels teams.
4. I was aware that Rodney was a mild haemophiliac but it was barely a problem. I was also aware that if he had an injury such as a sprained ankle, the swelling would be greater than average.
5. Rodney became infected with HCV during a hospital visit. On the day in question, he had sustained a head injury playing football. I think I was playing football with him that day but I took little or no part in his care. He was admitted to the hospital that day and being a mild haemophiliac, he was detained overnight.
6. When he later came to tell me about his experience, he said they told him he should have an injection for his injury. He said, and I can hear him saying it now, "I don't want any of that bloody stuff!". I assume that being haemophiliac, he was aware there was a problem with the Factor VIII treatment that was given. He then told me that during the night, a male doctor had woken him and given an injection while he was half asleep. And that was it for the rest of his life.

Section 3: Knowledge of Infected Blood Products

7. I do not think I was aware of infection from blood products in 1986. Hepatitis C had not even been named, and there was only talk of a non A non B strain. Hepatitis A was at the time endemic, and it had not been long since Hepatitis B had been called Homologous Serum Jaundice.

8. The first people in Bournemouth to die of AIDS were in 1981 at the Royal National Hospital, but it was not until the mid 1980s when it all kicked off. I worked as a Medical Underwriter at that time and I remember the anxiety of the Actuaries and Executives to the new HIV infection. The Actuaries had done their calculations on known mortality but the HIV and AIDS epidemic threatened to introduce a mortality they had not accounted for. However, the scenarios the Actuaries produced, which were all dreadful, did not come to fruition due to the clean needle program. The clean needle program provided free sterile needles to intravenous drug users which reduced the transmission of blood borne diseases.

9. I did not provide medical advice to Rodney during that time about the use of blood products for haemophilia treatment and the risks associated with their use.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

5th June 2019