

Witness Name: Collin Catterall

Statement No: WITN1145001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: November 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT COLIN CATTERALL

I, Colin Catterall will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Colin Catterall. My date of birth is GRO-C 1969 and I live at GRO-C
GRO-C Lancs, GRO-C with my wife. We have two grown up children and four grandchildren. I am unemployed. My wife is a nurse and works full time. Earlier this year I attempted to work at Iceland for approximately 8 hours a week, but I was unable to due to my illness.
2. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How infected

3. I was diagnosed with moderate Haemophilia B also known as Christmas disease from birth. GRO-C

4. When I was a young child and I had a bleed I use to get bags of plasma at the hospital. I had attended the Old Preston Royal Infirmary (OPRI) for bleeds around my joints and Lancaster Hospital (LH) for tooth extractions. I currently attend Manchester Royal Infirmary (MRI) and have done so since the 1980's.
5. Between 1978 and 1979 I had a tooth extracted at LH and I believe this was the first time that I was given Factor 9 (FIX).
6. Between the late 1970s to the late 1980s I have attended different hospitals as stated above and for each visit, I believe I was given FIX.
7. In or about the late 1980s I had a tooth extracted at OPRI. Approximately two weeks later I went to Ireland for a holiday to visit family. Whilst I was in Ireland, I attended a hospital in Dublin as I had problems with the tooth that was extracted at OPRI. I was given FIX at the hospital in Dublin to control the bleeding. However, when I returned to the UK after two or three days, the bleeding continued. I therefore went to OPRI and I was given more FIX.
8. I believe I was infected with Hepatitis C (Hep C) between the late 1970s and the late 1980s as a result of FIX. On one occasion when I attended the hospital for a routine check-up, I recall seeing on the doctor's screen something about a non A and non B virus, but I am not sure if I had the infection at the time or if I was at risk for the infection, but I was never told about it.
9. I was not given any information about FIX and the risks involved with infected blood products. My father recalls being told that FIX was a new treatment in the late 1970's the time when I had my tooth extracted but he was not told anything more than that.
10. In or about the early 1990's GRO-C (who is also a haemophiliac) told me that he had Hep C. I did not think anything of this and did not ask any further questions about it. I cannot recall if he told me how he contracted Hep C.

11. In or about 2010 I collapsed as a result of drinking. I was taken to the MRI. Dr Kochar, who was my treating doctor at the time came and spoke to me and told me that my liver was damaged from the drinking. The doctor also told me that I had Hep C. This was the first time I was told that I had Hep C. I told the doctor that they were confusing me with [GRO-C] but then I was told that there was a mix-up with the medical records and [GRO-C] never had Hep C it was me who had Hep C.
12. When I was told I had Hep C it then made me think about the other incidents that had occurred prior to 2010. For example in the early 1990s my GP told me by letter that I had to move to another GP because I will cost them money. I thought this was strange at the time, but I did not think anything of it and moved GPs.
13. I was not told how long I had Hep C, but I believe that I had Hep C from the early 1990s when the doctors mixed up my medical records with [GRO-C]'s medical records. I believe that if I was not taken to the hospital when I collapsed, I would not have been told about the Hep C infection.
14. I was told by Dr Kochar that there were treatments available for Hep C but I would not be able to start the treatment because I was not well enough. I was also told that the drinking and Hep C had done irreparable damage.
15. I believe I was given adequate information to manage the infection when I was told about Hep C in 2010. However, I consider when they told me it was too late.
16. I believe that the information about Hep C should have been provided to me earlier. [GRO-C] was told in the 1990s and I believe I should have been told then. I was having unprotected sex with my wife for years, so she was at risk of being infected.
17. I do wonder if my wife and children were tested without their knowledge. There were signs that the hospital knew something at the time if not earlier that people were being infected, for example, when my wife had our first child

in the late 1980s, she was asked to use a different bathroom from everybody else. I therefore believe that the doctors had some knowledge that I had Hep C at that time.

18. I was given no information about others being infected with Hep C when I was told in 2010. My wife had common knowledge about Hep C because she is a nurse, but the doctors did not tell me anything.

Section 3. Other Infections

19. I do not believe I have any other infections from infected blood products, but I do not believe that hospital staff would tell me if I did.

20. I recall receiving a letter within the last eight years with information about vCJD but I have not received any further information about this or a follow-up consultation.

Section 4. Consent

21. I believe I was tested without my knowledge, consent and without full or adequate information.

22. I also believe I was tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

23. I believe I have been affected by the infections both mentally and physically. I have been suffering from memory loss and fatigue and I recall I had these symptoms prior to the diagnosis with Hep C. There are times that I get up in the mornings and be fine but other days I would sleep all day and physically do not have the energy. I used to be active but since being diagnosed with Hep C I have been so down and depressed. In 2010 I recall the doctors telling me that I only had five years to live. They told me that my liver could

deteriorate within a period of two weeks. This was always on my mind. I want to actively do things to keep healthy but because of my fatigue I cannot.

24. When I was told I had Hep C, I was worried that I would infect my wife, children and grandchildren.

25. I have cirrhosis of the liver and I was told it was caused by Hep C and drinking alcohol. I went into rehab in 2010 because I had been drinking since I was 16. I did not know my liver was already damaged. I believe if I was told in the 1990's that I had Hep C I would have stopped drinking earlier.

26. I was first given Interferon and Ribavirin treatment for Hep C in 2012, which was a combination of daily tablets and an injection once a week. I found the treatment very hard. When I had the injection I would very quickly deteriorate physically and mentally. I would then start to feel better but then I would have to take the next injection. The treatment was for approximately 6 months but during my treatment I ended up in hospital as I was so sick, so I did not complete the treatment.

27. In 2015 there was a new drug called Harvoni which was a combination pill. This treatment was for 3 months, which I completed. My viral count was down to zero and I was told this was classed as undetectable. However, when the treatment finished I went for a blood test approximately four weeks later and I was told that my viral count shot back up.

28. In 2018 I had another course treatment of Ribavirin and Eplclusa. After I completed this treatment I was told that my viral count had gone down to zero. I am due a blood test in December 2018 to see if my viral count remains the same.

29. I believe I faced difficulties in accessing treatments. When my first course of treatment failed, I recall the doctors telling me that there was a new treatment called the Harvoni, but I could not have the treatment because it was too expensive on the NHS. I felt insulted when I was told this and thought that the only reason I had Hep C was because I was infected by infected blood

products. I was told to wait until it was cheaper and then finally received the treatment in 2015.

30. The side effects of the first treatment were worse. I lost my appetite and I lost weight. I would really struggle when my wife left for work as she was leaving me by myself. I would feel lonely and very depressed. I did have my in-laws come over to visit to try and keep me company. My grandchildren would not come to visit when I was having the treatment because I could not risk getting a cold or flu from them. I had to skype them instead. I found this difficult as I needed my family's support through a difficult time.
31. The physical side effects of the last two treatments were not as bad as the first treatment. I just suffered from fatigue. I also have a bad memory, but I do not know if this is an effect from the Hep C or the Hep C treatment.
32. I believe I suffered from mental side effects from all three treatments. I was told that I only had five years to live so I was desperate to clear the Hep C. I believe even if my results in December 2018 remain unchanged it will always be in the back of my mind that the Hep C could come back and I will never be clear of it. If I had been told in the 1990s when I believe the doctors knew, I could have started the treatment earlier and I believe I would not be in this position.
33. I believe my infected status has had an impact upon my medical treatment and dental care. It was very difficult to find a local dentist at first because when I provided them with my medical history I was told that they were not able to treat me. It took approximately four years to find a local dentist who would treat me; prior to this I attended the hospital for all my dental treatments.
34. When I started the treatment for the Hep C, I suffered from abscesses from the injections which needed medical attention. When I informed the hospital about this, my appointments would be cancelled and rearranged for another date. The treatment was only carried out when I insisted that the appointment were not cancelled.

35. Being infected with Hep C has impacted on my family's life. I have to be careful around my grandchildren. I would panic when my grandchildren would come over to stay. I would move my tooth brush so the children were unable to reach it and I had to be careful with the towels that I use. It would also worry me when I cut myself and my grandchildren are around me. As previously stated my wife is a nurse, so we were and are aware of ways to keep everyone safe. This has now become our way of life, always cautious when family and friends come to visit.
36. I believe that the infection has had an affect in relation to employment. My wife now has to work full time because I am unable to work. She would have loved to work fewer hours in order to spend time with the grandchildren.
37. I have a few close friends who I have told about my health, but I feel I cannot tell anyone else because I believe the stigma still exists. I have had comments from friends and family where I have been told that I look well and then questioned as to why I am not working. I always tell them that I am not well enough to work but I do not go into detail about it. I would only tell people that I have Hep C if I knew I was putting them at risk for example, I had to tell the nurse at the hospital to put some gloves on when she was taking blood.
38. The haemophilia has affected my education, but I did not know I had Hep C at the time. However, about two years ago, I did try a level three course in counselling which was a part-time, but I could not pursue it as I was unable to concentrate. I wanted to do a degree in counselling, but this would have been full-time for approximately eighteen months. I know I could not have completed this due to the Hep C side effects of fatigue and poor concentration levels. I would have liked to have done the degree and pursued a career in counselling, but I feel that being infected with Hep C has prevented me.
39. I struggle financially to get travel insurance. It can cost approximately £1,600 for travel insurance for a single holiday. I have not been able to afford this. I

have been on previous holidays without travel insurance and my wife and I would get into arguments as a result. I would always worry that I would fall ill aboard, but it was a risk that I took because I could not afford the travel insurance. I would just take my medication with me and hoped nothing would happen. I cannot just sit back and wait to die, I want to enjoy my life.

40. I also found it difficult to get life insurance. After years of searching I did manage to get some life insurance, but the pay out is a very small amount in the sum of £10,000. I currently pay £8 a month. This has really affected me knowing that my family will only get £10,000 when I die and I do not consider this amount is enough. I am unable to get a mortgage due to the fact I cannot work.

41. I have planned my own funeral and I pay this on a monthly basis. It is the little things that mean a lot to me.

42. The main mental impact that I have is that my family could have been infected with Hep C. We have asked the GP if the family could be tested for Hep C, but the GP told us that we do not need to.

43. I believe if it was not for my family, I would not have been able to cope. My family have been fantastic and continue to provide me with their support.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

44. Since I found out I had Hep C I have not been provided with any care and support from the hospital.

45. I have not been offered any counseling or physiological support. I am not sure if it would have helped, but it may have done if it was offered it in the early 1990s when I believe I should have been told.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

46. I found out about the Skipton Fund from the MRI at a routine appointment. The doctor told me that there was a fund available for haemophiliacs who have been infected with Hep C.
47. I applied for the initial stage 1 payment in 2011. I cannot recall if I received £20,000 or £25,000. This application was straight forward. I then applied for stage 2 payment and I recall that the doctor had to assist me with the application. I received a payment in the sum of £50,000 in 2012. I now receive a monthly payment in the sum of £1,500 and I also receive a winter allowance in the sum of £500.
48. I have asked EBISS as to my entitlements in August 2018 and they sent me a letter with a list of what I am entitled to, which I signed and sent back. I later received a letter from them stating that I am not entitled to anything that was listed. I made a complaint and as a result they have now assisted me with the funeral payment.
49. I feel that I had to jump through a lot of hoops and send a lot of documents in support of my case/application. I had to prove that I had liver damage to get stage 2 payment and it depended on the genotype.
50. As previously stated I found the Skipton Fund to be straight forward, but since EBISS have taken over, I find the process to be long and degrading.
51. I have also found that there is no continuity between different funds in different areas. Everyone has been infected with the same product, but everyone is treated differently. I recall receiving a letter from EBISS which showed what Scotland was getting and what England was getting. The people receiving funds in Scotland were getting approximately 5 to 6 thousand pounds more than what I was getting.
52. I was told by Skipton that when I die my wife will have to call them and they will make a lump sum payment of £10,000. This does not seem like very much. I feel that there is no point in saving money because my wife does not want to do anything by herself once I have gone.

Section 8. Other Issues

53. In 2010 my wife contacted a solicitor's firm to see if I had a case on a 'no win, no fee' basis. She was told that they would not touch my case. My wife wanted to know where I stood in relation to being infected with Hep C, but they would not assist us.

54. My wife has recently joined the contaminated blood group.

Conclusion

55. I want the Inquiry to give me honest answers. If I was told in the 1990s that I had Hep C, my life could have been different now. My life expectancy may have been longer. We have had to adapt our lives to the current circumstances.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

56. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed..... GRO-C.....

Dated *29th November "2018"*