

Witness Name: Michael Eugene Grady

Statement No: WITN2145001

Exhibits: WITN2145002

Dated: 29th June 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MICHAEL EUGENE GRADY

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 5<sup>th</sup> November, 2018.

I, Michael Eugene Grady, will say as follows: -

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is name is Michael Eugene Grady. My date of birth is the GRO-C GRO-C 1944 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I am a retired lorry driver. I intend to speak about my contraction of Hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me and my wife Kelly.

## **Section 2. How Infected**

2. I was infected with Hepatitis C as a result of being given contaminated blood by way of a blood transfusion after an operation to remove my gall bladder.
3. Sometime in August 1978 I had severe stomach pains and was admitted to Bath Hospital in Bristol. I was examined by the Doctor and taken for surgery to have my gall bladder removed. I do not know the name of the surgeon or the Doctor's I saw. After the Operation I woke up to discover I was being given blood intravenously through my right arm. I was told the operation had been successful and I remained in hospital for about a week before I was discharged. No one ever talked to me about why I was being given blood. I just assumed I needed it as I had lost a lot of blood during the operation. I was never informed that there was a risk of being exposed to infection from contaminated blood.
4. I was a fit and healthy man up until 2011 when I started to get severe lower back pain. I went to my local GP, Doctor Welsh at Lawrence Hill Surgery, Bristol. He examined me and took my bloods for examination. A few days later I received a letter from the surgery to say my blood had shown some abnormalities and I was being referred to Doctor Gordon, a liver specialist, at Bristol Royal Infirmary. I attended at the appointment and was given a thorough examination and more blood was taken from me. Not long after I got a letter from Doctor Gordon asking me to make an appointment with her as my results had come back.
5. I do not remember what date I went back to see Doctor Gordon. She said that I had Hepatitis C and that it had attacked my liver causing me to have cirrhosis of the liver. I did not know what Hepatitis C was and I asked her how I had got it. She asked me if I injected drugs and shared needles. I reassured her I didn't and had never injected drugs. She asked me about my sexuality and if I was promiscuous. I assured her I wasn't. She started asking me if I drank a lot of alcohol. I don't drink alcohol at all. I

remember she asked if I had ever had a blood transfusion. I told her that I had received blood following my gall bladder operation in 1978 at the hospital. She told me that this would be how I had got Hepatitis C. She told me that around the time I had had my operation and received a transfusion, blood was being imported from America that was contaminated and that must be how I had been infected. She said that Hepatitis C had lay dormant in my system for over 30 years. She started talking to me about the cirrhosis of the liver and how it was life shortening. I was really frightened I remember thinking this is it, I'm going to die.

6. Doctor Gordon did explain to me that the infection could be passed on to others through sexual intercourse and advised me to tell my wife who should also be tested. I was totally devastated and very worried I had passed the infection onto my wife.
7. Doctor Gordon didn't really give me much information to help me understand and manage the infection, she just said it could be passed on.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

8. I have not received any other infections other than Hepatitis C as a result of being given contaminated blood.

### **Section 4. Consent**

9. I do not know if I was treated or tested without my knowledge or consent. I do not know if my blood was ever used for research. From being told I had hepatitis C I have had regular appointments with Doctor Gordon and I always have my bloods taken, I just assumed it was to test my liver functions.

## Section 5. Impact

10. I did not suffer any physical or mental effects of having contracted Hepatitis C until I started having pains in my lower back.
11. I suffer from eczema and severe itchy skin. I believe this is as a result of contracting hepatitis C. I have also been diagnosed with diabetes and have to inject insulin twice a day. I suffer from severe fatigue at times. I have always been a fit and healthy man but since starting the treatment I was given for the Hepatitis C I have had many ailments as I have described.
12. Doctor Gordon offered me treatment for Hepatitis C she said it was the only treatment available at the time. I was led to believe there was no other treatments available.
13. I faced no difficulties or obstacles in getting the treatment, it was offered to me. I do not believe there were any other treatments available to me.
14. The treatment I received was over a 12 month period. It consisted of me having to inject myself three times a week. I can't remember the name of what I was injecting. The injections were very painful and I hated doing it. I injected into my stomach. I also had to take tablets but I can't remember the name of them.
15. The treatment I received had horrendous side-effects. Physically, I had extreme flu-like symptoms. I became extremely fatigued. My skin was extremely itchy and I was constantly uncomfortable. I felt nauseous and generally unwell.
16. Mentally, I became very depressed. Obviously my mood was low because I felt so ill but I believed I was going to die. It was a horrible 12 months but at the end of the treatment I was told it had been a success and the Hepatitis C had gone.

17. Having Hepatitis C did not have an impact on any medical or dental care for any other conditions.

18. 

GRO-C

19. Our son Brian is in prison and has been since he was 16 years of age. He is now 33 years of age. He is mine and Kelly's only child and we were both devastated when he went to prison. In all the time he has been in prison he has been moved 22 times to different prisons throughout the country. Kelly and I have had a two-week visiting order and we have never missed a visit. When I was on the treatment I was exhausted and felt very ill and I struggled at times to make the visits. I really had to force myself to go. 

GRO-C

 I wouldn't kiss Brian when we saw him, for fear of infecting him. 

GRO-C

  

GRO-C

20. Kelly and I are aware that there is a stigma surrounding Hepatitis C. It is associated with prostitutes and drug users. It is for this reason that we didn't tell anyone 

GRO-C

  

GRO-C

 No one knows even to this day 

GRO-C

  

GRO-C

21. There were no work related or financial effects on me as a result of the Hepatitis C as I found out I had it after I had retired. However, while I should have been enjoying my retirement, since taking the treatment I have been constantly ill. I am now a diabetic and have eczema. My skin is covered in pimples and is still very itchy. I had no illnesses before the treatment.

22. GRO-C  
GRO-C Kelly stood by me when I was on the treatment for 12 months but I know I made life difficult for her. She says I became a different person and was moody and quite snappy.

#### Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

23. Neither Kelly or I were offered any counselling or psychological support GRO-C  
GRO-C As my infection had caused me to have cirrhosis of the liver I believed I was facing certain early death. I believe I would have benefited from someone other than Kelly to talk to about how I was feeling.

#### Section 7. Financial Assistance

24. I heard through Doctor Gordon at Bristol Royal Infirmary that financial assistance was available for people that had been given contaminated blood and had contracted Hepatitis C and HIV. She gave me an application form and I filled it in and sent it off to the Skipton Fund.

25. I was told by the Skipton Fund that I could not get any financial assistance because I could not produce my medical records around the time I had received my blood transfusion.

26. I believe the application form to apply for financial assistance was fairly straightforward. The difficulty I had was trying to get my medical records.

After many phone calls to Bath Royal Infirmary I was told that they couldn't find my medical records for the time I had my blood transfusion. It was because I couldn't find the proof that I had had a blood transfusion that I didn't receive any financial assistance.

### **Section 8. Other Issues**

27. I do not wish to remain anonymous in this inquiry.

28. I have a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> January, 2013 from Doctor Gordon to the Skipton fund that states the most likely cause of my infection is through NHS treatment. I produce a copy of this letter in evidence and identify it as **WITN2145002**.

### **Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

29/6/19