

Witness Name: Allyson Adams

Statement No: WITN2324001

Dated: 20th February 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ALLYSON ADAMS

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry rules 2006 dated 12th December 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, Allyson Adams, will say as follows: -

1. Introduction

1. My name is Allyson Adams. My date of birth is GRO-C 1966 and my address is known to the Inquiry. I intend to discuss my late mother, Lilian Margaret Blow, her infection of Hepatitis C, and how it impacted on her, me and our family.
2. My late mother is Lilian Margaret Blow who was born GRO-C 1938 and died as a result of a Brain Haemorrhage on the GRO-C GRO-C 2011 at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital in Talbot Green. The secondary cause of death was given as liver cancer.

3. By way of background I live at my current address in a small once typical mining village just south of [GRO-C] but grew up in the [GRO-C]
4. I have two older brothers, Stephen and Michael.
5. My dad is still alive and was prepared to give a statement but very recently [GRO-C] to a point where he is incapable of giving one.

2. How Infected

1. No one knows how my mother was infected but she had several blood transfusions during her lifetime including the removal of her gall bladder, then later her spleen and may have been given blood during two Caesarean operations. She also had her Thyroid removed. I believe her gall bladder was removed in 1964. Her spleen may have been removed in the early to mid 1980's.

3. Other infections

1. I am not aware my mum had any other infections other than Hepatitis C.

4. Consent

1. I do not have any knowledge as to whether my mum was treated or tested without her knowledge, or consent without being given adequate or full information or for research.

5. Impact

1. As a family we grew up in the [GRO-C] and had a happy and uneventful childhood. My mum's health appeared to be normal at that time, apart from having her gall bladder removed in the mid 1960's. My

mum worked all her life in the shop we owned and then once that closed worked as a kitchen assistant in the old Tyntyla hospital up until she retired when she was in her sixties. I left home and got married to my first husband in 1988.

2. However, I can recall around the mid 1980's my mother noticed a bruise on her foot which just appeared. My cousin who was a nurse at the time suggested that my mother have it checked out, which she did. I believe she went to the GP for tests and a short time later my mum told me that her blood platelet count was really low. She was then prescribed steroids by her GP. She may have been given other medication but I cannot recall what that medication was.
3. Around that time she also had a bone marrow test where the point of entry was near her neck. Approximately 18 months later and as her blood platelet count was not responding she had an operation to remove her spleen at the Royal Glamorgan Hospital. She then recovered from this major operation and was subsequently placed on Metformin and Antibiotics.
4. Probably a few years after her spleen was removed my mum's health gradually started to deteriorate. She appeared fatigued, lethargic and not her bubbly self. My mum was a very smart and proud woman who wouldn't leave the house without any lipstick on but that changed when the diagnosis was told to her. Although she was never medically diagnosed or treated I thought she was suffering from a mild form of depression.
5. It may have been around the 2011 timeframe that after coming back from her regular diabetic check with the GP she sat me and my two brothers down and told us that she had contracted Hepatitis C. She told us that it was from a blood transfusion which is what she said she had been told at the clinic. She regularly had these tests on average every 4-6 weeks. Apparently she had known for some time before but kept it from us. She was given no advice on what the condition was or

what precautions she needed to take and was never offered counselling. She was extremely upset by this diagnosis as there was no cure and she didn't know what the future held for her.

6. There was an added stigma as my mother was told at the time of diagnosis by the Practitioner that there were three ways that you could catch Hepatitis C, one was contaminated blood, another was factor 8 or other related products or the third was through having unprotected sex with an infected person this latter stigma really upset my mother as she was a devoted wife to my Dad.
7. Soon after my mother's diagnosis GRO-C I GRO-C got tested for Hepatitis C, the results of which GRO-C came back negative.
8. Her health started to fail quite rapidly from 2011 and after scans and tests she was diagnosed with liver cancer at the Velindre Hospital in Cardiff. As soon as the cancer was diagnosed my mother told me that same day. My ex sister in law used to take her back and for the hospital for the tests.
9. I was told by the specialist at Velindre that she would be given one course of Chemotherapy and there was nothing more they could do. I was with her at the time and her words were "oh well, that's my life over".
10. A care plan was then put in place for end of life care and she was given 6 months to live, she only lasted 3 months and died as a result of a Cerebral Hematoma in hospital after falling from her bed whilst at home.
11. During her time at home my Dad and on many occasions myself had to feed her, dress her and care for her basic needs. Before she died she told me that she didn't want to die alone. My Dad and I carried out her wish and stayed there at her side until she took her last breath.

12. The loss of my mother outweighs any sense of justice or compensation; she was not only my mother but also my best friend.
13. Her death has affected all the family; she has also missed the recent births of what would have been her great grandchildren, and her grandson's wedding, the other grandsons graduation which I know she would have been one proud grandmother at these occasions.
14. I found it really difficult and heart breaking to see my mum dying in hospital, wired up to all those machines. Part of me didn't want to see her like this but I couldn't let my Dad be at her bedside all alone so put on a brave face for him.
15. I remarried in 2016 and my husband Gary had only met my mother once before she died and I feel more than angry that I cannot share my new found happiness with her. My Dad is heartbroken and although I visit him several times week and take him shopping, you can tell he is pinning for my mum and he's lost his sparkle.
16. I feel that she was totally robbed of her life from the time when she contracted Hepatitis C, we dealt with her low pallet count and diabetes and it was being managed really well. But her health deteriorated once a confirmed diagnosis of Hepatitis C was made and our family life was never the same.
17. Her death has not only robbed my Dad of his soul mate and best friend but we as her children are so lost as she was the backbone of the family. I miss her chats and her advice, she would always be free to give, she was always the one to say I'm here and the door is always open and the kettle was always on. The impact of loss to me as her only daughter was a truly sense of my right arm was gone, it's the worst feeling in the world to think that she had died and suffered through a medical disease that she had no control over.

6. Treatment/Care Support

1. I don't know what treatment she was receiving for her condition.

7. Financial Assistance

1. My Mum prior to her death was refused payment from the Skipton fund as they said there was no record of her having a contaminated blood transfusion. Despite appealing this in 2012 it was turned down.

8. Other Issues

1. My biggest issue is how my mother contracted Hepatitis C. Still to this day we have no answers and as far as we the family are concerned no nearer to the truth. The only possible way that she contracted Hepatitis C was through a contaminated blood transfusion. We deserve answers for what has happened to her and deserve justice for what she was put through with no fault of her own and what we were put through.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed..

GRO-C: A Adams

Dated.....

20/2/2019