

Witness Name: Eileen Burrige  
Statement No: WITN2327001  
Exhibits: **WITN2327002**  
Dated: 1<sup>st</sup> May 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF EILEEN BURRIDGE

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry rules 2006 dated 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, Eileen Burrige will say as follows:-

#### 1. Introduction

1. My name is Eileen Burrige. My date of birth is GRO-C 1929 and my address is known to the Inquiry.

#### 2. How Affected

1. I am personally not infected. The infected person was my late husband Arthur Burrige. I have two children, a son and a daughter. I am a widow. My husband and I got married when he was 49 years old and I was 40 years old.
2. My husband received contaminated blood when he was around 65 years old. He was admitted to hospital as a result of noticing bruising

on his arms. He noticed very heavy and dark bruises underneath his arms.

3. My sister in-law was a nurse and my husband was helping her decorate her bathroom in Pembrokeshire. He wasn't very well at her house and when he came home he showed me the bruising and we alerted his GP.
4. When my husband was admitted to hospital in January 1985 I was asked by the doctor there and then if he was a haemophiliac.
5. At the age of 65 my husband was then told he was a haemophiliac and received Factor VIII for the first time. When he was given the Factor VIII I did not attribute any importance to it, apart from that it was meant to help him. I don't know how many times he was given Factor VIII. As far as I know, he received Factor VIII on just one occasion.
6. My husband was first given the Factor VIII in Morriston Hospital Swansea. Only recently did I find out about the contaminated Factor VIII and the fact that my Husband was at a very high risk of being contaminated with a deadly virus as a result of receiving these blood products.
7. My husband was in Moriston hospital for over a week. He started to develop jaundice after a few days at the hospital. He went very yellow in the face, however he was walking about fine. They told us to take him to take him to Singleton Hospital Swansea where he was admitted and stayed for five days. A few days later at Singleton Hospital Swansea he was able to converse with me. However one evening I would say he became mentally imbalanced. I remember there being a stack of chairs in his room of the hospital and he was trying to climb up them.
8. Visiting him from then on became a struggle. He started calling out for his mother. We did not know he had hepatitis C until after he died. At Singleton Hospital I was told my husband had received Factor VIII and that some of

these products had been contaminated with hepatitis C. He went in on the Sunday and died on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 1985 from hepatitis C.

9. The whole situation was bizarre and things escalated quickly. I wasn't informed a lot whilst at the hospital; nobody said a word to me about what was going on. I was more or less shocked really. When we heard the shouting we were wondering what was going on. I don't think my husband recognized me a few days before he died.
10. During the time we spent in Morrilton Hospital we did not get told about how my husband had contracted jaundice or the implications of having haemophilia.
11. My mother-in-law didn't have haemophilia, my husband's sister or brother did not have haemophilia either. He was the only one in the family who ever had this. We did not attach any importance to him being given Factor VIII.
12. As I stated earlier in my statement, I believe my husband was only given Factor VIII once. Near the time of my husband's passing, he and his brother made a will with the bank. However I would like to add that him dying was a huge shock.
13. The one thing I remember vividly is him having jaundice. When he was in Morrilton Hospital to begin with no one told me that he had hepatitis C.
14. Only now am I aware of the risks of hepatitis C being passed from one person to another. My daughter was the person who brought this to my attention. No one has ever told me definitively that my husband had hepatitis C. The only reason I am aware of my husband contracting

hepatitis C is due to the Factor VIII he was given and the jaundice he developed very soon afterwards.

15. During that brief time between my husband falling ill and his death, no one told me how to look after him. My daughter was 15 and a half at the time. She went to the hospital to visit him.
16. No one was told the severity of the situation. The shock of finding out all of this was the most difficult.
17. I just didn't understand, my husband was a healthy man before all of this. They did not tell me how he could have been infected and I have never been given proper answers. I was blissfully ignorant to what was going on.
18. I had to pay money for the death certificate. I was so shocked to understand the cause of death on my husband's death certificate. I was not fit at the time to notice or understand these things. I refer to Exhibit WITN2327002 which is a copy of my husband's death certificate.

3. **Other infections**

1. My husband had malaria for years. This was not attached to hepatitis C complications. My husband's malaria did recur from time to time.

4. **Consent**

1. No information was shared with us regarding my husband being at risk of receiving contaminated blood. I never thought of these things happening to us.
2. My husband was able to understand if things weren't right and was a person with a high moral standard.

3. He would not allow anyone to test any products on him with his consent. He had all of his faculties before this. He was an intelligent man. The people at the hospital explained to him that the blood products he would be receiving would be good for him and the condition of his blood. Therefore, he allowed them to give him the products.

5. Impact

1. At the time we did not know the blood was contaminated. I would say I connected my late husband with these contaminated products from seeing it on the news, on the radio and in the newspaper.
2. I became more frightened recently when reading about what was going on at the time.
3. I was very frustrated and shocked at the time. He was a healthy man who was mentally and physically fit.
4. I was never very depressed when he passed I just grieved for a long time and I believe that grieving is natural. I was not ill physically either but it was difficult to draw a line under it.
5. My husband loved having a daughter. I feel at the time I should've done more to get answers and pursued certain lines. My daughter missed out on a lot of things and I did not have a choice but to support my family and return to work. I worked until I was 70 years old. I am now in my 90s.
6. My family were shocked about what had happened. My daughter has always felt and still feels as though she needs answers. I feel like

people knew what was going on at the time with the blood and should have let people know there and then. There isn't anymore I can add to that.

7. My granddaughter wants to know what happened to her granddad. As she is only 11 years old, she does not know the full extent of what happened. I have been shocked more by how it could have affected us. The fact that the hepatitis C could have been sexually transmitted has weighed heavy on my mind.
8. Only my wage was coming into the house at one point. I had a daughter that wanted to travel the world which she did on her own back but I wish I could have supported her more financially.
9. I was a single parent. I was the manager of a coffee shop in Swansea Students Union. I never thought of having a pension. If he had been alive me and my husband would have travelled together. Me and my husband went on a lot of holidays together and would go a couple of times a year. He earned good money. After he passed I couldn't afford holidays.
10. The only thing I can think of when I discuss the death of my husband is shock. My son lost a step-father who was also his friend.
11. My husband got his step-son a job as a land surveyor. They would often go to the rugby together.

#### 6. Treatment/Care Support

1. This is not a topic I am able to discuss due to the sudden death of my husband.

7. Financial Assistance

1. I have never heard of any of these funds. I have never thought of people doing things like that. I have never claimed for anything apart from what I have worked for.

8. Other Issues

1. In relation to records, I believe they have been destroyed. I feel as though we should have been more informed that my husband had been given contaminated blood.
2. I should have been made more aware of the contaminated blood that was being given to people. I was quite ignorant of what was actually going on at the time.
3. What permissions my husband gave about receiving the blood products I will never know as his records have been destroyed and he is no longer here to provide his opinion
4. I thought Factor VIII was a make up product. I honestly can't say however how many times he received the Factor VIII blood product.
5. I believe the Inquiry should be about making people more aware of what happened. We would like more information. We didn't have any reason to question what my husband was being given at the time.

### Statement of Truth

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

Signed..

GRO-C

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Dated..

1-5-19

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