

Witness Name: Anthony Nelson Needham

Statement No.: WITN3212001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 29 October 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANTHONY NELSON NEEDHAM

I, **Anthony Nelson Needham**, will say as follows:-

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Anthony Nelson Needham. My date of birth is **GRO-C** 1935 and my address is **GRO-C**. **GRO-C** I am married and live with my wife of 58 years. We married in 1961 and we have one daughter, who is aged 54 years old.
2. I am making this statement about the effect and impact of the death of my brother, Francis, from HIV. I believe he contracted this following treatment with contaminated blood products. He was born in 1927 and died on 20 May 1987. He was 60 years old when he died.

Section 2: How Affected

3. I have mild haemophilia A. I have always had nosebleeds which slowed and eventually stopped as I got older. My brother, Francis, also had haemophilia A but his was severe. We were the first in our family to have haemophilia. It came from nowhere, as there is no previous family history that I am aware of.

4. The routine haemophilia treatment was not something that really happened. We would go to the GP if we needed help but because my condition was mild, I rarely had to do anything about it. Francis did not go to his GP much either.
5. I enlisted in military service which was possible only because no-one was aware that I had haemophilia at the time when I enrolled. I spent three years in the Air Force and my condition did not affect me very much.
6. I do suffer with pain in my joints now, although this may be arthritis. I have had dental care in hospital and a minor head injury resulted in a subdural haematoma for which I was given special treatment in 1998. Otherwise, haemophilia has not affected me or my health personally in any significant way.
7. Francis, had a much more difficult time with haemophilia because of the severity of his condition. This meant that he was bleeding into his joints on a regular basis. He had no real treatment for bleeds at the beginning, and I am not sure if Cryoprecipitate was ever offered to him. His bleeds were mainly into his joints and resulted in him becoming crippled.
8. Francis was a mechanic by trade. There was not enough money in that profession and so he went "knitting". There was more money in this but they let him go after three years because he had to keep taking time off because of his haemophilia and the treatment he needed. Francis was not married and I do not think he was working when I got married in 1961.
9. As far as I am aware, the last employer he had treated him well however they could not continue managing his absence. The machines he worked on made cardigans. If he did not work then hundreds of garments would be stopped in manufacture.

HIV Infection

10. Francis had a hip operation in 1983. The doctors took a bone out of his hip to put it in his ankle to improve his walking ability. He was given Factor VIII at the time and it is my view that this was the contaminated blood product that caused his death.
11. In November 1983 Francis had the hip operation at Queens Medical Centre in Nottingham. He attended an appointment at City Hospital in 1986, where he was diagnosed with HIV. After his diagnosis in 1986 I do not believe that my brother was told much about his HIV diagnosis at all nor any help offered. They did not suggest that we needed to keep the diagnosis quiet. He died at the City Hospital in Nottingham in 1987. Dr E A French of Queens Medical Centre sent to my mother, sometime in June 1988, details about the Macfarlane Trust regarding any help they could offer.
12. As Francis was not diagnosed with HIV in front of me, I do not know how he was told about this infection. Francis never really talked or made any kind of show of his suffering. He was the type to struggle quietly. Francis was told to keep an eye on his condition and to be aware of a potential other infection that could potentially affect him, which we now know would have been Hepatitis C. I do not think Francis had this infection.
13. My mother was a war widow. She was given a good pension for that and also received an old age pension. I do not know if Francis contributed to his living at home, however, he stayed with her until he died.
14. Between Francis' hip operation and his death, his walking did improve and so the operation was a success. He had never walked so well in his life in fact. It was not long before he started to become unwell again though, and I expect this was

the effect of the HIV. In February 1987, he was admitted to City Hospital after falling quite ill. He was kept in isolation and at the time we did not know why.

15. I remember that I took him out in a car in the last week of his life. He was losing weight and seemed to have accepted that he would not be coming home from the hospital. He did know that he had been treated with contaminated blood and that this was the cause.
16. Francis died at City Hospital on 20 May 1987. When Francis died, the coroner provided us with a death certificate which said "HIV" on it as one of the causes of his death. The hospital had told us one week before he died that they had tested him and he did not have HIV even though Francis had been diagnosed with this in 1986. I insisted that they record that the cause of my brother's death had been "contaminated blood" on the death certificate but they did not. They recorded his death as caused by 1a), pneumonia, 1b) HIV, 2) haemophilia.

Stigma

17. At the time, the stigma around AIDS was that it was a "gay problem". I did not want him associated with that. I knew that the blood was coming to us from America and that the problem had come from there.
18. The stigma was the main reason I had wanted it qualified on his death certificate that it was contaminated blood that had taken his life. I did not want it open to suggestion that he had had a lifestyle of drug use or that he had been gay. That was the stigma at the time and that is what I wanted to avoid.
19. I remember that we had friends who came to know that he had HIV in the later years of Francis' life, and they just cut us out of their lives. They were worried that we could infect them because my brother had an infection. They had always known we had haemophilia but that was not seen as a problem because you could not catch haemophilia.

Section 3: Other Infections

20. As I have said above, Francis told me he was made vaguely aware of a potential other infection that could affect him, and I now know this would have been Hepatitis C. I do not think Francis had this infection.

Section 4: Consent

21. In terms of consent for testing, we were told we were going for routine blood tests and did not know at the time that we were being tested for HIV until we were given the results. Mine was negative, and of course, Francis' was positive.
22. I do not know anything more about whether Francis consented to treatment or testing. He did not really mention this as an issue.

Section 5: Impact

23. We accepted haemophilia in the family when we came to know that that was what Francis and I had. It was passed on by women and the men got it. My daughter GRO-C she does not want kids so the condition stops with us.
24. I remember being given Factor VIII concentrate when I had six teeth out. The nurse used to come to the house on a weekly basis to give me a Factor VIII injection. The last blood product I was given was many years ago, and it was Cryoprecipitate. I understand that a new synthetic product has been rolled out and given to children first. I have never had any infection through the use of contaminated blood.

25. I was not told about the risks of HIV or haemophilia really when I was given blood products, nor when Francis was diagnosed with HIV. We were told not to allow Francis to mix with people and that came from correspondence he received, not from an actual conversation with medical professionals.
26. There was no "song and dance" about Francis' HIV diagnosis. None of us knew much about it and we were not even really sure that he had it until he died because of what the doctor's had said about testing him again. I did not know a lot about HIV when it was diagnosed. We were not told about the implications and any knowledge that we had, came from the press which was very negative at the time. We only found out about contaminated blood at a later stage.
27. I recall that the doctor was quite uppity when I said that I wanted it qualified on the death certificate that his death had been caused by contaminated blood. I was annoyed that they would not do this. I did not want him lumped in with others.
28. In February 1987, Francis showed flu-like symptoms, almost as if he had pneumonia. He was admitted to be treated for that. I remember the first time I saw him in his hospital bed after that hospital admission. He looked shocking. The doctors did not tell us anything about this at the time. I did not hear my mother mention it either, and the information was very contained within our family. She wanted to take the Government for every penny she could for authorising the use of infected blood because she had seen first-hand how much my brother had suffered.
29. The mental impact on Francis was evident as well. He was over the moon after his hip operation and being told that he did not have Hepatitis C, but he did know that he would have to watch out for it. Nobody at the time knew that HIV was something that would kill him.

30. This changed when his symptoms began to get worse but I think that he had accepted that this would be the end of him when he was readmitted. I was not aware of him being offered any counselling support and neither was I. It was not the thing to do at the time.
31. I found paperwork dated 27 May 1987 which is when a post-mortem was done and it "located complex hiatus hernia and pneumonia". The letter also found that a batch of "contaminated Factor VIII" was used when his hip operation was done in 1983, and this was an American product.
32. The impact of his death on me was significant. I lost my brother and that affected me more than when I lost my father in the war. My father had been pronounced "missing" and we were quite young at the time. My mother had a typical British "stiff upper lip". Nothing phased her. I remember she was told by a doctor at the time that 60 was a "good age" for Francis to have lasted to, considering he was a haemophiliac.

Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support

33. I do not know a lot about any treatment Francis may have had for his HIV infection. As I say, he was not one to talk about his illness much.
34. I do not think Francis was ever offered counselling for his infection. I doubt he would have accepted any offer of counselling even if they had offered it.

Section 7: Financial Assistance

35. My wife and I dealt with the Macfarlane Trust for my mother. I would always go to the hospital for blood tests with Francis, I was clear, but Francis always seemed to have other complications, mainly to do with his joint bleeds. It was in 1983 that we were all told to go to the hospital and I think they were telling all haemophiliacs

to do this so that those with HIV or any other infection as a result of contaminated blood could be told about it.

36. I also helped my mother complete the paperwork surrounding her involvement with the Archer Inquiry. We completed a witness questionnaire. I do not know what happened about this. I know she did not have to give evidence.
37. We got in touch with The Haemophilia Society to help us with the process of dealing with the Macfarlane Trust. They put us in contact with them in December 1989. My wife sent a letter to The Haemophilia Society in the month before, which is when I joined the Society. After writing to them, the Macfarlane Trust volunteered a payment to my mother of £23,500 in May 1991. I had to sign and witness documents for the receipt of that money. I recall my mother also had to sign a letter to say that she would not bring other proceedings once this payment had been made. At the time we had no intention of doing so and so did not think anything of signing the paperwork.
38. No financial payments other than the payment to my mother in 1991, had been made. Francis received nothing in his lifetime, although he might well have been in receipt of invalidity benefits from the State.

Section 8: Other Issues

39. I want the Inquiry to find out how these products were allowed to be brought over from America and used in English hospitals without anybody realising that they were contaminating the people they were treating.
40. Overall, I do not think it is the hospital's fault that he was treated with contaminated blood. I blame the people who purchased that blood for use in English hospitals.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed ... GRO-C

Dated... 29-10-19