

Witness Name: Raymond Albert Marechal

Statement No: WITN3628001

Exhibits: 1

Dated: October 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF RAYMOND ALBERT MARECHAL

I, Raymond Albert Marechal, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Raymond Albert Marechal. I live at GRO-C
GRO-C Surrey, GRO-C. I was born on GRO-C 1945. I live with my wife of 19 years and my dog. I am a semi-retired coach driver. I have two children, my late son Pierre and my daughter Kelly, who is 42 years old.
2. I make this statement on behalf of my deceased son, Pierre Steven Marechal, who was born on GRO-C 1966 and who passed away on 15 December 1993, at the age of 27. My son was infected with both HCV and HIV, as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.
3. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Pierre's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

4. My son, Pierre, suffered from severe haemophilia A. My first wife's father had haemophilia, so I believe Pierre was checked and diagnosed at birth.

5. His early childhood was dreadful, people used to stare at him because he had bruises on his face all the time. Every time he bumped himself, he would get a bruise. We had to be very careful around him; he couldn't play football or any other sports at school.
6. Pierre's health meant we could never go on holiday too, which was a huge thing to contend with. We went once to the Isle of Wight, but had to be rushed back to Portsmouth so he could be injected with products. On a separate occasion, he had to be airlifted to hospital, due to suffering of a serious bleed.
7. We wanted another child, but decided to wait as we didn't want to pass the haemophilia on again and were later thankful to have a daughter.
8. Up until he was around six years old, he was treated at Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital in London. When we moved to GRO-C in Kent, he was seen at Margate District Hospital.
9. The care Pierre received was very good. If the bleed/knock was particularly bad, he would go to the hospital and have Factor VIII concentrate injected.
10. At the Haemophilia Centre at Margate Hospital, Pierre used to receive care from Dr M Lincer and Dr H Stendle. It was quite a journey to get to Margate from GRO-C every time he had a knock. However, when he was about 11 or 12 years old, we were allowed to start treating him at home with Factor VIII concentrate. We would store this in our fridge.
11. We were never told what the Factor VIII concentrate actually was; just something along the lines of, 'this would be what stops Pierre from bleeding.' At the beginning we were not told of any of the risks of his treatment. Only when HIV started surfacing in the media, were we told about what the risks actually were.

12. I do not recall how the diagnosis of HCV and HIV came about. I recall the country became short of blood and they had brought a lot of blood from America, which is my understanding after doing subsequent research.

13. Eventually in the early 1980s, my ex-wife and I were told our son only had 10 years left to live. We had some form of group session discussion and I recall being very upset and my ex-wife telling me to calm down, because they wouldn't tell us anything if I continued to be so distraught. I cannot recall any of the wording as spoken to me at the time, as I was very upset and it was so many years ago.

14. We never told Pierre. The hospital told Pierre separately when he turned 18 years of age. Their prediction of how long he had left to live was accurate and almost true to the day.

15. Pierre was 27 years old when he died. It was a death warrant for our son. Shortly after he died, they came out with a new treatment to prolong life of those suffering with the infection. Pierre never got this opportunity.

16. There was never a plan in place to treat his HIV, I am aware he did start taking some tablets at some point but they made him very sick. I cannot recall what these tablets were.

Section 3. Other Infections

17. I believe Pierre was infected with HCV but I cannot be sure of the details. I don't believe he contracted any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

18. Our knowledge was that Pierre was being treated with clotting factors and so it was a life saver for us. We never questioned anything about it; to us it just seemed like a miracle.

19. I believe he could have been tested for research as an infected haemophiliac.

20. I don't believe Pierre was ever told he was being tested for HIV or HCV, and we certainly never gave consent.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

21. As a family we were devastated and we didn't know much about HIV. When Pierre was eventually told about his infection, it never really sunk in for him. He cried a lot and started to isolate himself in his bedroom.

22. Pierre's illness did take its toll on my marriage and put pressure on us, but it wasn't the main reason for our divorce. I got remarried and my wife is very laid back. Pierre accepted that we had all moved on with our lives.

23. Prior to his diagnosis, Pierre was a very outgoing person but he became incredibly withdrawn. His girlfriend left him because of the news and he found it difficult to make any new connections. The stigma was so great and he struggled to find anyone new. He was very honest with his infections with any of the girls he later met on. However they used to stay clear of him, but he didn't want to lie to them under any circumstance.

24. When you see your children upset, you become upset yourself. We tried to reassure him as best we could, but he was absolutely devastated.

25. Pierre's health declined rapidly in the last few years of his life. He moved out for a period of time around the age of 21 or 22, until the age of 26, but moved back in with his mum because he became too ill to look after himself.

26. He was in and out of hospital for most of his life. We had a carer who was also a district nurse and who came around to check on him regularly. In the last year, it all became too much having to deal with the haemophilia and the HIV.

27. Towards the end of his life, Pierre lost the ability to walk and was reliant on a wheelchair. We had moved back into London at this point. He became incredibly thin and frail. It was obvious he was dying during the last year of his life; there was just no quality of life. It was almost as if he was waiting to die.
28. He completely lost his appetite and his immune system went completely. He was constantly suffering from chest infections and coughs; we used to have to be very careful with him.
29. At the very end, my son could hardly speak. He just lay there all the time on his mum's sofa and could only eat liquid foods. He did have a special bed at home and was provided with all the equipment he needed to stay at home, for as long as possible. I was there most of the time with him too. I remember we were all around him at home the night he died. It was kind of expected, that this was going to be it. They injected him with morphine to numb the pain and in the end he couldn't move.
30. Pierre was very sociable and had a large group of friends growing up. When he told them about his infections, they all believed he was gay. Being gay was not as acceptable as it is now and it really affected him. He became completely withdrawn and stopped going out.
31. HIV was linked to the gay community and he used to get a lot of stick from his friends. He wrote a poem which I read out later at his funeral. I believe these words truly showed what he was going through. The poem is exhibited at **WITN3628002**.
32. I think that the wider circle of friends showed a lot of stigma towards him, because everyone knew everyone. It wasn't a very big town and when everyone found out, he really felt their attention.
33. He even struggled to receive any medical or dental care. Everything had to be done in the hospital; I don't think the dentists at the time would touch him. He went to Margate Hospital for all dental treatments.

34. Kelly, my daughter, used to be embarrassed that Pierre would pick her up from school because of his HIV. She would only have been 9 or 10 years old at the time and none of her friends knew what was going on in our family, but she would feel shame too.

35. Pierre was ambitious and had great career aspirations. We paid for him to go to school to be a hairdresser; because that was something he could do privately and on his own terms. He couldn't do anything physical that required hard work and so hairdressing was the only thing we could support him with. He was an excellent hairdresser, but had to give it up when he became too ill to work. I cannot recall when this was.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

36. I do not believe that Pierre ever struggled to get any treatment; he had everything there for him whenever he needed it. Even when he was at school, they gave him a medical alert for his wrist. We had good support, even throughout his haemophilia issues. He was always looked after quite well.

37. I do not believe we ever received any psychological support and I do not believe it was ever offered to Pierre or my family.

38. It is difficult to say whether receiving psychological support or counselling would have benefitted me, I don't know what the outcome would have been had I have received treatment.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

39. Pierre received a £10,000 lump sum payment, which I believe was government funded.

40. Pierre also received a monthly disability allowance when he turned 18 years old, which he received until his death. I believe he bought a car with this

money and had a disabled blue badge for his car. I do not know how much he received.

Section 8. Other Issues

41. I have not been involved in any other litigation, campaigning or anything like that. I haven't been able to watch the Inquiry itself, because it's too hard.

Anonymity

42. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

43. I would be willing to provide oral evidence should the Inquiry request it.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated... 04.10.2019...