

Witness Name: P J Threakall

Statement No: WITN1563001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: November 2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF PAUL JAMES THREKALL

I, Paul James Threakall, will say as follows:-

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Paul James Threakall of GRO-C
Birmingham GRO-C My date of birth is GRO-C 1968. I live in rented accommodation with my fiancée and 5 children.
2. I make this statement as the eldest son of Robert Threakall who died on 20 January 1991, aged 47. He was infected with Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV as the result of receiving contaminated blood products. My mother, Sue Threakall, is also giving a statement to the Inquiry (WITN1564001).
3. I have not had access to my late father's medical records.

Section 2: How Affected

4. My Dad had severe Haemophilia A.

5. My parents must have decided when I was quite young to shield me and my brothers from some of realities of his medical condition. We were all aware of his need to inject reconstituted Factor VIII and I remember that when I was young he had home treatment. He showed me how to administer his Factor VIII and I helped him with it a number of times. This started when I was around 11 years old.
6. In or about 1985 Dad was diagnosed with HIV. I cannot remember what my parents told me at that stage about his diagnosis because of the passage of time. I remember there was a lot of confusion when he was diagnosed about what we should be doing. He received conflicting advice from his doctors and the Haemophilia Society – I remember at one time we were told we couldn't share a bathroom with him – then we were told we could but we couldn't share towels.
7. I distinctly remember being told not to touch his Factor VIII or injection equipment. I was also told not to touch his toothbrush or razors. At one point there was confusion over the toilet seat and whether or not we had to wipe it. As a teenager it was all very difficult and confusing.

Section 3: Other Infections

8. My Dad was exposed to Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and HIV. My mother's statement will set out any other information available about his infections.

Section 4: Consent

9. I have no knowledge of what discussions took place between Dad and his treating doctors. My mother will deal with this in her statement.

Section 5: Impact

10. I never saw my Dad as other people did. Although he was disabled by his haemophilia he was very active and involved in my life when I was a child. He loved life and tried to make the most of what he had. He taught me DIY, chess, table tennis, badminton and too many other things to mention. He tried to teach me to fish and failed – much to his disappointment. But first and foremost he was my Dad.
11. I remember being told that he was ill when he was diagnosed and finding that confusing because at that stage he did not look ill.
12. Looking back now I can see that Dad changed after his diagnosis. He had been a very active man and post diagnosis he was more careful about what he did – for example he didn't do DIY anymore.
13. Dad had a shed in the garden where he did woodwork and I used to help him make wooden boats with paper sails. We didn't do woodwork anymore after he was told he was ill.
14. I was at school when Dad was diagnosed. I did my O-levels and A-levels and got good grades. I was awarded a place at Birmingham University to study Electronics and also managed to get funding for the course. However, I didn't end up going. When it came to it I didn't feel I could move away and into Halls. I think by then I sensed that there was more going on than my parents had told me and I didn't want to be away from home.
15. I stayed living at home until about 1989. By then I had a girlfriend and we found a little house close to my parents which we put a deposit on to rent. However the relationship fell apart before we could move in because she felt that I was spending too much time with my parents.
16. I moved into a bedsit shortly after the relationship broke down. It was less than ½ mile from my parents' house and I used to visit them nearly every day after work. Looking back now I can see that Dad must have been deteriorating but it was a gradual process and I don't think I noticed it at the

time. I remember he wore thick jumpers and baggy trousers which must have hidden his weight loss.

17. I think by 1989/1990 I was aware of his diagnosis. Either Mum or Dad must have told me. However there was no internet in those days and really HIV and Hepatitis were just names to me. The term AIDS was certainly never mentioned.

18. I remember the day that it really all hit home. It was a sunny day, probably in 1990, and my parents asked me to repair the roof on the shed. I went round at the weekend and got up on the roof and started the repair. I noticed that Dad had sat down on the lawn. Ten minutes later he was still sitting there. I asked if he was all right; he looked up at me and asked me to help him up. I hadn't seen him fall over but he couldn't get up again. This was the point that I knew something was very, very wrong. I thought my Dad was wasting away.

19. To my great shame, a few weeks after that I stopped going round to my parents as much.

20. I can't remember how long after that it was that he died but I had not seen him for weeks when I got the call to say that he was at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham and that I needed to go in. Mum did not tell me when he was taken into hospital.

21. It was a big shock when I went into the hospital. I was at his bedside when he died. He was only 47 years old. It was the single worst experience of my life to see my Dad, eight stone in weight, in a hospital bed dying from a disease he should never have contracted.

22. It was life changing for me when Dad died. I buried myself in my work. At that time I was a sheet metal worker.

23. Not long after Dad died the family slowly went to pieces.

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and I have now not spoken for about 5 years. We were very close when we were younger and it saddens me that our relationship has broken down.

24. I made some poor decisions after Dad died. I missed his guidance. I rushed into marriage which subsequently ended up in divorce and I have an estranged daughter who lives at distance.

25. There was nothing that my Dad and I could not discuss. For my 15th birthday Dad brought me a top shelf magazine and wrapped it up. He told me to read it and come back to him if I had any queries. We were very close and I miss him every day.

26. I have been denied more time with my father; my children have never known their grandfather. All this was avoidable.

27. My grandmother died 2 years after my Dad and I believe she died of a broken heart. She was never the same after Dad died. This was another big loss for me as she had helped raise me. My aunt (Dad's sister) was also heart broken and has since become very reclusive.

Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support

28. I cannot comment on the treatment/care/support provided to Dad during his illness. I was not offered any assistance following his death.

Section 7: Financial Assistance

29. I cannot comment on this as my mother dealt with this side of things.

Section 8: Other Issues

30. I believe that Dad and many other haemophiliacs were used as guinea pigs. I don't understand how people could do that and how we have never had

answers about what really happened at the time and who knew what. I hope that this Inquiry will address all these issues.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

31. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry. I am happy to be called to give oral evidence if the Inquiry consider it would be helpful for me to do so.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed....

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Dated

20-11-18