Witness Name: Ann Krauhaus
Statement No: WITN6266001
Exhibits: WITN6266002-3
Dated:

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANN KRAUHAUS

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 6 June 2022.

I, Ann Krauhaus, will say as follows: -

Section 1: Introduction

1. My name is Ann Veronica Krauhaus and my date of birth is GRO-C 1950. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am divorced and have been with my partner for 23 years. I have one son.

2. I wish to speak about my infection of HCV, following a blood transfusion. In particular, I wish to address the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment I received and the impact of these infections on my life and the life of my loved ones.

3. I confirm that I am not currently legally represented and that I am happy for the Inquiry Team to assist me with my statement.

4. I also confirm that I have had the option to seek anonymity and the Inquiry's statement of approach explained to me. I can confirm that I would not like to seek anonymity.

Section 2: How Infected

5. I received a blood transfusion with infected blood and, as a result, I contracted HCV. I was admitted to hospital on 29 May 1976, due to pregnancy issues. I can remember that night so well. It was my second pregnancy.

6. I had a difficult pregnancy with my first son; I spent seven weeks in bed. I was advised not to get pregnant for a few years after this.

7. My second pregnancy was even worse. I started haemorrhaging and was taken by ambulance to West Hill Hospital in Dartford, which has since closed. My husband at the time could not come with me to the hospital because we had a two and a half year old child who he had to look after.

8. My medical records do not say that I had a blood transfusion. I know I had one, I can remember everything so well. There was blood everywhere. When I was taken to the ward, the doctor said how many "cups of blood" I lost, which I thought was a strange reference point. I don't recall how many "cups" were mentioned.

9. I felt like I was losing consciousness and I was above everyone else, like an out of body experience. They gave me a blood transfusion and operated on me. I know I would have been dead without the blood transfusion.

10. The doctor asked me to sign something. I'm not sure what it was but I suppose it was consent for the operation. He said to me something like "your baby is dead and it was killing you". This was how I was told that I had lost my unborn child.

11. My medical records state that I had an "incomplete abortion at 14 weeks". I have shown this to the Investigators, it is exhibited as **WITN6266002**. I did not try to abort my baby, it was basically a miscarriage. I remember the nurse in my ward telling another patient that I lost my baby but I wanted to lose it. I assume this was because it was not planned.

12. I was discharged the next day. We moved house that week; life went on and we got over it. I was not offered counselling or anything.

13. I have not had any other children since. My son is fine because I had him before I had the blood transfusion. GRO-C GRO-C. My ex-husband and I divorced in 1990. GRO-C. When I was divorced, AIDS was on the rise; there was no question of unprotected sex so I would not have passed it on.

14. I was in reasonably good health at the time. I went back to college after. I studied and started working. I had a career as an IT Consultant Project Manager.

15. Everything was fine until the early 2000s. I started to get very itchy skin. It was uncontrollably itchy for about a year or a year and a half. I thought it was because of the washing powder I was using so I changed it but I was still itchy. I went to a dermatologist, they did not know what was causing it.

16. In 2005, I went to Princess Royal University Hospital (it was called Farnborough Hospital at the time). I had some tests done and the consultant diagnosed me with HCV. I told him I had never taken any drugs, so he said it was most likely as a result of the blood transfusion.

17. I also had a biopsy of my liver - I'm not sure if this was before or after my HCV diagnosis. The pain from the biopsy felt like a gun to my liver and I passed out. This had to be done twice; it didn't work the first time because I needed more vitamin K. I also had breathing problems at the time, and I had breathing tests.

18. When I was told I had HCV, I did not know what it was. It was a shock to me. The consultant was helpful, he explained what it was. He also said there are things we can do now, and it does not mean I will die from it. He did not mention alcohol consumption. Before I knew I had HCV, I drank socially.

19. I asked the consultant how this had not been picked up sooner, especially following my hysterectomy. He said it is not something which is tested routinely.

20. No other risk factors apply to me, such as drugs and tattoos. I do have an ear piercing but this was done a long time ago, somewhere clean and reputable.

21. I was put under the care of Dr McNare at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich. I mainly saw specialist nurses. After some time, Angela Hart became my specialist nurse. She was an angel. I hated going to the hospital, but I felt so much better when I saw her. I kept in touch with her even after my treatment, she was wonderful.

22. I underwent treatment with Interferon three times, in 2006, 2009 and 2012. I was given it as an injection with Ribavirin. I cannot recall if I was given any other drugs at the time. I was tested after 12 weeks for the first and second Interferon treatments; both times it failed.

23. In November 2015, I started treatment on Harvoni, a NICE approved drug. I was the first person in the hospital to get it; this was just after it was approved. Angela fought for me to get it. I was on Harvoni for three months or so. It cured me of HCV.

Section 3: Other Infections

24. I have not been told that I have contracted any other infection.

Section 4: Consent

25. I do not think I was tested without my knowledge. I'm surprised I was not tested sooner. I think it is possible that my blood has been tested without my consent.

26. I have attempted to take part in research studies. Angela put me forward for a trial at a hospital in East London but they turned me down.

27. Additionally, after my third treatment of Interferon, around 2012, I offered to take part in a trial for a new drug, which was possibly Harvoni, with a pharmaceutical company. They turned me down because I was not suitable.

Section 5: Impact

28. When I had HCV, the itchy skin is what really affected me. I have scarring on my legs from it. I could not help but scratch and the scratch marks do not heal. I had to change my sheets regularly because I bled so much. It was like menopause; I was sweating at night. I used to keep my partner awake and he had to go to work. He had to sleep in another room at times. At the time, and now, I could not bear to be touched. I'm not sure if it is psychological.

29. After I found out about my diagnosis, and before I received any treatment, I was anxious. I did not know what the treatments were and I had to wait a while to get an appointment. I did not want to go for scans and I just did not want to know about it. My energy levels were low. I used to be sporty and walk long distances.

30. For the first two treatments of Interferon, I was told I would be on it for one year if it was successful. It was a pretty horrible drug, I would be amazed if I could last year.

31. There were mental and physical side effects to Interferon. It does things to your head. I would cry a lot. People commit suicide whilst taking it.

32. Angela made sure I had support; I had the support of my partner and my family. The hospital did not organise support for me; I did not ask for it but I did have Angela's number and I'm sure she would have answered if I called. I did not feel the need for support from the hospital.

33. For the first two or three days after the injections, I could not go out. My sister would have to go shopping for me and run other errands. There were times I could not even walk up the stairs; I had to crawl.

34. You had to have a lot of discipline to inject yourself weekly; you would start to get a bit better after a few days but then it was time to inject yourself again. It was so hard knowing that you were going to get ill again. When I improved during the week, I could drive and go out. It would take three to

four hours to take effect. I then had flu-like symptoms, would be shaking and have to lie down. It got worse each week.

35. It was like chemotherapy; my hair became thinner and I think I would have lost it after a year. I also lost a lot of weight; my dose had to be adjusted because of weight loss. It was hard to find enough fat to inject and it left big bruises.

36. I had regular hospital visits, which meant that I could not forget about it and just live my life. I was told it would be difficult. When it failed, I had mixed feelings. It was such a relief because I did not have to do it again.

37. When I had to undergo the second treatment, I could have said no. Angela said she thought I gave up too early. It did not work for the second time.

38. When I underwent Interferon treatment for the third time, I took interferon with another drug but I'm not sure what it was. Around three weeks in, I went to hospital because I had a rash. Angela was worried that I had an anaphylactic reaction. I was not too concerned but she was immediately worried and told me to stop the treatment. I think my body just could not cope with it again.

39. Harvoni was nothing like Interferon and it cured me of HCV. I saw Angela for two years after and it did not come back. After two years, she referred me to the Hepatology Department and I am still with them.

40. Currently, I have cirrhosis, chronic thrombocytopenia and grade 2 esophageal varices. I still get itchy skin. I have to have an endoscopy every so often to monitor my body. I have an ultrasound every six months, even during the COVID-19 lockdown.

41. I have reviews with a consultant every six months. At the moment, I have appointments over the phone, which are not as good as face to face appointments. They always insist that I have scans, which I hate having. I do not want people looking anymore but I am relieved when I have had them.

42. I have a general loss of hair and fatigueness; I'm not sure if this is linked to my HCV infection or age. I was fit before my infection. I would play tennis and badminton and I would walk for miles. I went to the other extreme and I have never recovered from that.

43. In 2005, I stopped working in IT and went to horticultural college for a year. The idea was that I would get a job after. I was diagnosed with HCV at the end of my college course. I did not have to stop my course but I could not work after. I could not have worked through the treatment. I wanted to work in a garden centre, or something similar, but I could not because I was so ill and I did not have the energy.

44. I had to give up work and take out my private pension in 2006. If this did not happen, I would have taken it out in my 60s. I had a career change to horticulture, but I could not benefit from this. I am still receiving my private pension. My partner is nearing retirement and we own a property, and I would find it difficult to survive on just my pension. I have taken out my impaired life pension, which I obtained because I thought my HCV was terminal and I did not think that I would live this far.

45. I love travelling but travel insurance is so expensive, because of my cirrhosis. The last time I checked it was £2,000 for a 2-week holiday, and this was pre-pandemic. Several companies would not take me except for Liverpool Victoria; but it was over £200 for two weeks and no coverage for my liver. It is five times more expensive because of my liver. It is a major block for me. If I got compensation, I would put some money aside to fund travel insurance.

46. I do not have life insurance. I do not think I need it as I have savings.

47. My infection has had an impact on my relationship with my partner. We have been together for 23 years. My skin is itchy and I do not like being touched. I do not know if it's a psychological reaction, because sometimes I react before he even touches me. I would accept help with this if I was offered it.

48. None of my friends ever treated me differently. They may have been careful but they did not make me feel any different. My son always lets me spend time with his children; they have not made me feel like they are worried about me infecting them. My family lives close to me and my partner has stuck by me throughout this. When I was cured, they all celebrated with me.

49. One on occasion, someone made a remark about sharing toilets with me. I would not purposely give it to anyone. I used to carry around plasters and was careful with bleeds.

50. I did not tell my dentist; they always used masks and cleaned the equipment after. I did not think I was putting anyone at risk.

51. I was a regular blood donor, especially in the 1980s, for about two or three years. I was working for an insurance company called NPI in Tunbridge Wells. Vans often came to our local area, organised by NPI, and collected blood donations. They became cautious about me donating blood as I took a diuretic. They asked me to stop taking the drug for about two or three days before I donated blood, so I stopped donating it. I feel awful because I may have passed on my HCV.

Section 6: Treatment/Care/Support

52. I believe I was given the information I needed. Angela was a godsend. I have not had any negative experiences and this is purely down to Angela. She stuck with me for years. She was exceptional and I would not complain about the hospital.

53. She was so positive about everything and was always looking for new things to help me. She had an open mind about things.

Section 7: Financial Support

54. Angela told me about the Skipton Fund and I applied in 2008. My application was refused on 27 February 2009. They said there was a lack of medical support confirming I was treated with NHS blood or blood products prior to September 1991 and that this was likely the source of my

HCV infection. This letter is exhibit **WITN6266003**. I did not appeal; I did not see the point as I was told that the medical records from West Hill were not kept when the hospital closed.

Section 8: Other Issues

55. If I had not had the transfusion, I would have been dead. It has had a bad effect on my life, but I needed it. I was beginning to lose consciousness and was having an out of body experience.

56. I do not understand why it has taken so long for the contaminated blood scandal to be addressed. My view is that they are waiting for us to die off. A huge number of people must have died and I am lucky I am still here.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed **GRO-C**

Dated 5th July 2022