

Witness Name: Anne Margaret Gardner

Statement No: WITN3481001

Exhibits: WITN3481002-006

Dated: 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

**INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY**

**FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANNE MARGARET GARDNER**

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 19<sup>th</sup> July, 2019.

I, Anne Margaret Gardner, will say as follows: -

**Section 1. Introduction**

1. My name is Anne Margaret Gardner. My date of birth is GRO-C 1958 my address is known to the Inquiry. I am not in employment as I suffer with ill-health and I am currently on disability benefits. I intend to speak about my late brother William Gardner. In particular, the nature of his illness, how the illness affected him, and the impact it had on him and our family.

**Section 2. How Affected**

2. William was my older brother. I was the youngest of four siblings. Ellen Buchanan, known as Lena is my eldest sister, then came William his date of birth was GRO-C 1954. Then my late older brother Thomas Gardner and I was the youngest. William was known by his family and friends as Billy. William was my brother and I loved him very much.

Despite the fact that he moved away to work in London for 17 years we still kept in regular contact.

3. In the early hours of 1 January 1974 my two brothers Billy and Thomas got into a fight. This was on New Years Eve and the argument between my brothers would have been fuelled by alcohol. Thomas stabbed Billy in the abdomen and Billy was rushed to the Southern General Hospital in Glasgow. Billy had been stabbed in the liver and his condition was extremely serious. Billy was taken to theatre for emergency surgery. I was told later that he had lost a lot of blood during the operation and required a blood transfusion. Billy was given contaminated blood and contracted hepatitis C. I can provide no details of the doctors or surgeon Billy was treated by. I do not think Billy was told of the risks of being given contaminated blood as his operation was an emergency.
4. Billy did not come back to the family home when he came out of hospital. He moved into a flat at Govanhill. In 1978 he moved to London and was working as a plasterer. I don't know the name of the company he was working for. Billy stayed in London for 17 years. During that time I did have contact with him. I would occasionally ring him from the phone box as there were no mobile phones in those days. I visited him on a few occasions and he would occasionally come back to Glasgow for a visit.
5. Billy moved back to Glasgow in 1995. He moved into a flat at GRO-C GRO-C. I also had my own flat close to him. I believe Billy moved back to Glasgow as he knew he was very ill and wanted to be home. I always liken it to an elephant who knows he is about to die and goes home to do so.
6. Sometime in 1995 I went with Billy to the Southern General Hospital. He had an appointment to see a Dr Beattie. Billy told me he had liver problems caused by him having hepatitis C. Billy told me that he had got hepatitis C from the blood transfusion he had had in 1974. He had developed cirrhosis of the liver due to the hepatitis C so he must have

had the infection for a very long time.

7. In 1994 I went with my partner at that time to the Southern General Hospital, Glasgow. GRO-C

GRO-C  
GRO-C Whilst at the appointment I asked to be tested for hepatitis C GRO-C  
GRO-C

GRO-C Doctor Beattie took my bloods to be tested. I did not hear anything from the blood test so I just assumed it had been negative.

8. Ironically, after Billy had seen Dr Beattie in 1995 I was also called in to see him. He told me that I also had hepatitis C. GRO-C

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GRO-C I could not understand why I had not been told earlier that I had the infection. I had been tested the year earlier but had never been given the results.

9. After the appointment with Dr Beattie Billy and I talked about our hepatitis C status. Billy had been told he had contracted the infection through being given contaminated blood in 1974. The hepatitis had severely damaged his liver. Billy was not offered any treatment as his liver was too badly damaged. I knew that I had got the infection through GRO-C

GRO-C  
GRO-C  
GRO-C

GRO-C Billy knew that he had got the infection from the blood transfusion as this was the only possible source. Billy did not take drugs.

10. I do not know if Billy was given any information to understand or manage

his infection. I suspect he wasn't as I wasn't given any information to understand or manage my infection.

11. I do not know if Billy was told of the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection.

### Section 3. Other Infections

12. As far as I am aware Billy did not receive any other infections other than hepatitis C.

### Section 4. Consent

13. I do not know if Billy was treated or tested without his knowledge or consent. I know in the few years before he died he was very ill and he was in and out of hospital all the time. I do not really know if Billy received any community support when he was ill. I know he had a home help at one point. Billy was very secretive around this time and I didn't see much of him. He had been having an affair with GRO-C and he didn't want the family to find out so he kept his distance from the family.

### Section 5. Impact

14. The impact on Billy of having hepatitis C ultimately caused him to die of liver cancer on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 1998 at 43 years of age. I produce a copy of Billy's death certificate in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3481002**.

15. Billy came home in 1995 and he was very ill. Physically, he had a swollen abdomen. Over the next few years before he died he physically went downhill. He told me he had constant abdominal pain and was always extremely fatigued.

16. I remember in 1997 Billy went to Edinburgh Royal infirmary to see if he was suitable for a liver transplant. I know Billy had a rare blood group and

I don't believe a blood donor was ever found. I produce a letter in evidence dated 19<sup>th</sup> June, 1997 regarding Billy's appointment at the hospital. I refer to this letter as **WITN3481003**.

17. Billy was not given any treatment for his hepatitis C. I do not know if any treatment was offered to him.

18. I do not know if Billy's infected status impacted upon his treatment for any other medical or dental care for any other condition.

19. The impact of Billy having hepatitis C and subsequently cancer of the liver ultimately cost him his life. When Billy was near the end of his life his illness caused a rift within the family. I remember Billy getting very upset and falling out with my other brother Tommy. He obviously blamed him for his illness following the blood transfusion he had after the stabbing. It was a very stressful time for all the family. My mother GRO-C  
GRO-C She GRO-C when her marriage broke down and a year later my father committed suicide. Billy lost his life through no fault of his own and I lost a much loved brother. I have suffered with depression ever since.

20. In 1995 there was a lot of talk on the media about hepatitis C and the aids virus. Billy and I knew there was a stigma attached to these infections. They were associated with, homosexuality and intravenous drug use. Clearly Billy was distressed regarding the stigma that surrounded his infection. GRO-C  
GRO-C Billy did not ever use drugs.

21. I do not believe that Billy knew there was any financial assistance available.

22. Billy's illness caused him to have to give up work in London and move back to Glasgow. Bill was a plasterer by trade and obviously this is a

physically demanding job. He was unable to work when he was here in Glasgow, he was far too ill.

#### **Section 6. Treatment Care Support**

23. As far as I am aware Billy did not have any counselling or psychological support. Billy was not the sort of person to speak to strangers regarding his personal life. So even if it had been offered I am certain he wouldn't have taken it.

#### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

24. Billy did not receive any financial assistance from any trust or fund. I do not remember how I found out that there were funds available for people who have lost loved ones through them being infected with contaminated blood.

25. I did apply to the Skipton fund for financial assistance in 2012. I received forms to fill in that were relatively straightforward. I had to get a letter from a medical professional regarding Billy's death. I produce in evidence a copy of the letter that was sent to the Skipton fund by Dr Morris. I refer to this to this letter as **WITN3481004**.

26. My claim for financial assistance was unsuccessful. I was very angry and upset when I received a reply from the Skipton fund. It seemed to suggest that William may have contracted hepatitis C from me. I produce a copy of their reply to me in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3481005**. I didn't appeal this decision as I didn't know you could appeal. I may apply to the Scottish Infected Blood Scheme in the future.

#### **Section 8. Other Issues**

27. I do not wish to remain anonymous in this Inquiry.

28. I have given permission for Billy's medical records to be released to Thompsons Solicitors. In 2013 I did ask for my brother's medical records to be released to me. I was advised that no medical records had been found. I produce a copy of the response I received in evidence I refer to it as **WITN3481006**.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

14-7-20