

Witness Name: Lesley Brownless

Statement No: WITN11110001

Exhibits: WITN11110002 – WITN11110007

Dated: 21.11.2018

LESLEY BROWNLESS

WITN11110007

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

LESLEY BROWNIES

GRO-C

WEST YORKS

GRO-C

26 MARCH 2001

DEAR MR. BLAIR,

I am a 39 year old mother of 3 children and I have HEPATITIS C.

When I was diagnosed with Hepatitis C in 1994 I was absolutely horrified. What was this disease, what will happen to me, will I get ill, will I die, who will look after my children? They were just some of the questions flying around in my head, and the worst thing was, I had no-one to give me answers, no-one to talk to that knew very much about it. Counseling would have been welcomed with open arms at this point in time. My consultant told me the news and I was just expected to go away and get on with my life.

Over the next few years I read as much as I could find on the subject, spoke to as many people as I could who had the slightest bit of information, and discovered that ailments I had suffered over the years were actually symptoms of the Hepatitis C, the following being some of which I suffer on a regular basis;

Severe fatigue
Total lack of energy <even an effort to talk>
Nausea
Joint pains
Depression
Itching <all over body, all day, every day>
Mood swings
Problems concentrating
Loss of appetite
Sore throat
Swollen glands
General feelings of ill health
And other things I would rather not mention.

On top of all these symptoms are various other factors that have had a major impact on mine and my childrens lives.

I am unable to work, which is a great financial loss to the whole family, we dont get to go on holidays, have treats and the little extras that most people take for granted, and above all that my dignity has been taken away from me, as I would want nothing more than to be able to hold down a job and provide for my family the way I had planned.

I cannot plan ahead as I never know from one day to the next how I am going to feel, consequently my social life is pretty non existent.

My children say to me when I am ill in bed "Why can't you be like a normal mum, why do you have to be in bed so much"? That breaks my heart.

I was a single mum, as I split up with my partner due to stress and pressure we were under due to the Hepatitis C . At this point I was faced with another set of problems. Would anyone want me? If so do I tell them straight away or do I wait? Would they be frightened off? And the sad truth was some people were. So not only was I suffering all the stress and anxiety and worrying about the future, but I had to face it alone.

This is just a brief account of the effects the HEPATITIS C VIRUS has had on my life, it would take hours to explain the impact it has had on me and my family also.

I hope you can find it in you to listen to what we the HAEMOPHILIA COMMUNITY are saying and compensate us accordingly for the pain and suffering we have had to endure through no fault of our own. And secondly to allow us all the use of recombinant factor so we can be spared the pain and worry of any other virus that is lurking around the corner. And last but not least let us have a public enquiry to find out why this was allowed to happen in the first place then perhaps lessons will be learned to avoid this happening again.

I would appreciate it if you could reply to me giving your views. I look forward to hearing from you in the very near future.

Yours sincerely

GRO-C

L. BROWNLESS