

Witness Name: THOMAS FARRELL

Statement No.: WITN0087007

Exhibits: Nil

Dated: 3rd July 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

SUPPLEMENTARY STATEMENT OF THOMAS FARRELL

I provide this statement to further iterate on matters raised in my written statement (WITN0087001), dated 13th March 2019.

I, Thomas FARRELL, will further say as follows: -

1. I have further been reminded by the Inquiry team of my right to legal representation and confirm that I am not represented at this time.
2. I would like to add some information about events that have occurred in the four months since I provided my statement to the inquiry.
3. I saw a new GP, Dr Johnson, who was a locum at my surgery in January 2019. At this time, I asked her about hepatitis C, but she told me that she didn't know anything about it and said she would refer me to the Infectious Diseases Clinic at James Cook Hospital, Middlesbrough, to speak to someone. I was additionally referred to an urologist and to a cardiothoracic specialist, for fluid on my lungs. These referrals were marked as "urgent" but the appointments I received were all for 22nd May 2019.

4. Dr McCarron, the specialist at the Infectious Diseases Unit was brilliant. Sue, however, disagrees. He asked me several questions about the source of my infection including: 'Are you sure you didn't have an operation and a transfusion when you were a child?' and 'Have you gotten any tattoos or used dirty needles?' Sue became angry and stopped him at this point and explained that it was during an operation in Newcastle that I was infected with hepatitis C. This level of ignorance about blood-borne infections in 2019 is abhorrent.
5. I was referred to the urologist to examine my prostate. Previous doctors had said that it was smooth and I therefore had not been concerned. However, this doctor said that whilst it was smooth, it was very hard and suggested I have an MRI, which took place the day after.
6. We struggled to get the results of the MRI. We made several phone calls and spoke to the secretary on multiple occasions. She said that a Registrar would need to give me my results, and promised to call back, but never did. We were then told she was on holiday and couldn't get the results until she was back. In the meantime, we asked my GP if they could get the results, but they said it was my responsibility, and wouldn't help. Eventually, one person said they would post the results to me, but I am still waiting for this letter to arrive.
7. When the secretary came back from her holiday, we called again and were told that "computer problems" were preventing her from giving me my results. We allayed our frustrations to the heart nurse who comes to check on me fortnightly, and she suggested phoning PALS, to make a complaint. However, we left two voicemails with them and no one has been in touch since.
8. Something must have happened behind the scenes because I was called in to the Urology department, three weeks after the MRI. A practice nurse told me that they had found prostate cancer, but that it hadn't spread. She also said that they needed to do more

investigations to find out the extent of the tumour. I pointed out that all of this could have been done three weeks earlier.

9. Sue has done some research to see if there is a link between hepatitis C and prostate cancer and has found that the rates of prostate cancer are much higher amongst those who have been infected with hepatitis C.

10. When I had the scan on my prostate, the results also showed that my kidney function is below normal, but I have not been offered any treatment for this so far. I did not realise before now that hepatitis affects more than just the liver, and that it can destroy the health of your other organs. This was never explained to me when I was diagnosed.

11. We recently received a letter from EIBSS, which offered Sue GRO-B towards the cost of my funeral, should I die as a result of hepatitis C. However, since attending the hearings, she is concerned that hepatitis C might not be included on my death certificate. Should I die of prostate cancer, then my funeral costs won't be covered, despite the link between this and hepatitis C. This will inevitably place an extra strain on her at an already difficult time.

12. Sue is aware that some people have inquests after their relatives die, but is not sure how this process works, or whether she will be entitled to utilise it.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated 3rd July 2019