

Witness Name: Gaynor  
Elizabeth George  
Witness Number:  
**WITN2469001**  
Dated: 27<sup>th</sup> February 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF GAYNOR ELIZABETH GEORGE

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I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry rules 2006 dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, Gaynor Elizabeth George, will say as follows:-

#### 1.Introduction

1. My name is Gaynor Elizabeth George. My date of birth is GRO-C GRO-C 1952 and my address is known to the Inquiry.
2. I am married with 3 adult children and I am retired. I worked as an Assistant Manager in a Cardiff Leisure Centre.
3. I am the Sister of Glyndwr Leslie Collins who sadly passed away in 1982 after being infected with contaminated blood products.

#### 2.How Affected

1. I make this statement in respect of my late brother Glyndwr Leslie Collins who sadly passed away in May of 1982 having received infected blood from a blood transfusion.

2. My brother Glyn was a serving police officer, he was very active and participated in a number of sports such as swimming and rugby. He was the captain of South Wales Police's life saving team who have now named a trophy in his honour. He was also a keen footballer, in fact Glyn was an all round sportsman!
3. Glyn was diagnosed with Hodgkin's Disease, which is a type of cancer, in 1978 at the age 27. He had been receiving treatment at the Heath Hospital (University Hospital of Wales) in Cardiff and also Velindre Hospital Cardiff for almost 3 years and was in remission when he became ill.
4. In 1982 Glyn was taking medication to help with his recovery. The medication that he had been taking in order to combat the cancer for the past 3 years had caused a bleed in Glyn's bladder and as such he was passing a large amount of blood through his urine.
5. Glyn attended ward A7 at the Heath Hospital in Cardiff in May 1982. We were told that Glyn had been prescribed too much of his medication and that's what was causing the bleeding.
6. He was losing a lot of blood and so the doctor's decided that he required blood transfusions in order to try and stem the flow of blood.
7. Neither me nor my family were given any warning or advice on the risk of Glyn receiving infected blood products before the treatment was administered. We all assumed that the doctors knew what was best for him.
8. This process required several transfusions over a period of a few days as the blood that Glyn received was leaving his body almost as quickly as it was provided to him.
9. After one particular pint of blood had been administered Glyn became very unwell. Dr Whittaker was the treating doctor at the time and our family were told that Glyn had received "a bad pint" of blood.

10. It was only 2-3 days after receiving this "bad pint" that Glyn passed away. Doctors told us that as he had only just come into remission that he did not have the strength to fight what was in the "bad pint" and that there was nothing more they could do for him.
11. Glyn died on the 16<sup>th</sup> May 1982 at the age of 31 having only been in hospital for a few days.
12. My parents were told by the doctors that Glyn had contracted hepatitis C (HCV) from this "bad pint". We were told once he died that we were unable to see him as the hepatitis had caused his body to turn green. Thankfully though we were eventually allowed to see Glyn to say our goodbyes.

### **3. Other infections**

1. Glyn did not receive any other infections only hepatitis (HCV) C that we are aware of.

### **4. Consent**

1. I believe Glyn was treated with his consent, however, neither he nor any member of our family was provided with adequate information by medical staff on the risks associated with blood transfusions at that time.

### **5. Impact**

1. Glyn's sudden death was a huge shock. He was such a big personality in our family.
2. My Father and Glyn were very close. My Father worked as a police officer for South Wales Police and Glyn followed in his footsteps. Glyn's death devastated my Father.
3. The death affected my Mother deeply as Glyn was her world. His death left a huge gap in our family.

4. As Glyn was in remission my Mother and Father had decided to retire and move to GRO-C so that Glyn could recover in peace and quiet. Unfortunately this never happened but my parents moved there after Glyn's death as they knew it was Glyn's wish.
5. Myself and my two sisters Deborah and Jayne were also devastated, Glyn was the oldest of us all and someone who we looked up to. His passing left a huge gap for all of us. My daughter Bethan Victoria was born GRO-C that Glyn passed away. Although she never met him she has been told what a wonderful, loving Uncle he was to my two sons and he chose her name Victoria.
6. Glyn was a well liked and much respected 'larger than life' character amongst friends and colleagues. They still recall happy memories of Glyn which brings smiles to their faces and it shows to our family how deeply Glyn is missed.
7. As I have mentioned previously South Wales Police's life saving team have named a trophy in his honour. I am also aware of friends who have named their Son's after him. My sister Jayne also named her first born son 'Glyndwr' after Glyn.
8. These are just a few instances that go to show how much he is missed by the people whose life he was a part of and not just his family.
9. Glyn did not leave behind a family although he did have a long term girlfriend at the time. He had said at the time that because of his cancer diagnosis that he would not ask her to marry him in case anything was to happen to him. Although he had told her that once he had recovered from Hodgkin's that he intended to marry her.
10. Glyn's death hit his girlfriend hard and I do not believe that she has ever settled down to this day.
11. It is the "what if's?" that hurt the most. Glyn had his whole life ahead of him before it was sadly taken away at such a young age. We had been

told that he was clear of cancer after having a scan, only for him to lose his life in such a cruel way.

#### **6.Treatment/Care Support**

1. Our family was not provided with any counselling or psychological support after Glyn's death. We are a very close knit family and we supported each other.

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

1. I did not receive any financial assistance from any of the Trusts or Funds that were set up to distribute funds.

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

1. The only issue I wish to bring to the inquiries attention at this time is regarding the conduct of medical staff once my brother Glyn had passed away.
2. Upon Glyn's passing medical staff told my Mother and Father that if they consented to the cause of death being Hodgkin's and not hepatitis C (HCV) then the family could avoid a post mortem and that ultimately "nothing would bring him back".
3. My Mother was adamant that she did not want a post mortem carried out on my brother as he had already been through enough. As such my parents consented to the cause of death being Hodgkin's on the death certificate and not hepatitis C (HCV).
4. We have always lived thinking that we were the only family that has been affected by events of this nature but the Inquiry has shown us that we are not alone and that thousands of people across the UK have been affected by the medical practices during the 1970's and 80's with some still suffering with symptoms today.

5. It is my wish that by participating in this Public Inquiry that in future no other family has to suffer as my family have.

## Statement of Truth

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

Signed..

GRO-C

Dated.....27.02.2019.