

Witness Name: S J Beddow
Statement No: WITN1089001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: February 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SIMON JOHN BEDDOW

I, Simon John Beddow, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Simon John Beddow of GRO-C Staffordshire, GRO-C I was born on GRO-C 1976 and I am married.
2. I prepare this statement as an affected person in connection with my late father, John William Beddow, who passed away on 29th December 2008 at the age of 52.
3. My father was infected with HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII.
4. My father had GRO-C 2 of whom also had Haemophilia and have now sadly passed away following their infection from contaminated blood products.
5. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

6. My father had severe Haemophilia A and received Factor VIII from 1979. My father had also been taught to administer Factor VIII to treat haemarthroses at home.
7. My father was treated at the Queen Elizabeth Medical Centre in Birmingham and Manor Hospital in the West Midlands. His consultants were Dr J T Wilde and Dr F G H Hill.
8. My father was never given any advice or information regarding the risks of receiving Factor VIII.
9. My father was advised that he had been infected with HIV at a routine clinic appointment by Dr Hill at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital on 23rd October 1986. I am unsure as to whether my father was given adequate information to allow him to understand and manage his infection.
10. According to my father's medical records, he tested positive for HIV as early as 1st December 1984. However, a letter dated 24th October 1986 confirms that there had been a delay in communicating this result to my father due to a non-attendance at a clinic. However, I am of the view that my father would have attended the clinic on more than one occasion between 1984 and 1986 and therefore I suspect that the delay was not just caused by my father missing one appointment.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. I recall that my father was possibly tested for vCJD in or around 2005 and I believe that the result was negative.

Section 4. Consent

12. My father was adamant that he was being tested without his knowledge and therefore without his consent. An example of this is the fact that he was not aware that he was being tested for HIV in 1984. I therefore strongly suspect that he was being tested on other occasions, and for other viruses, without his knowledge and consent. My father also told me that he was treated like a guinea pig.

Section 5. Impact

13. My father was a wonderful man. He used to run the Sunday League Football Team and he was at my first football game when I was aged 5. We also used to go out on our bikes together and I have some many fond memories of these early days.

14. Initially my father sheltered me from the reality of what was going on and he gave me the most brilliant start to my childhood.

15. The only reason my father told my sister, Cheryl, and me about his infections was because he had to give up work due to the infections, the side effects of the medications and the fact that his mental state had been completely altered by the fact that he did not know whether any given day was going to be his last.

16. My father was preparing us for the change in our lifestyle that was about to take place; almost overnight. He had done such a fantastic job of shielding us to date and I have nothing but admiration for the way in which my father handled things, in almost impossible circumstances.

17. We used to live in a brand new detached house and my father had a fairly new BMW and a company car. However, all of this suddenly changed when my father could no longer work. The company car and the BMW were

collected; my father had paid for the BMW but he needed the money so had to cash it in.

18. I remember that I had to miss school trips and used to have to wear "*charity clothes*" on non-uniform days so I stuck out like a sore thumb at school. We could no longer afford fashionable clothes. We basically went from having an affluent and "*flush*" lifestyle to living completely on the "*breadline*".

19. Cheryl and I had to grow up almost overnight and we both had to get ourselves into positions to be able to support our father.

20. I sat my GCSE's but my heart was not in the exams. I worried about my father and about our family's future. I was also very angry about what had happened to my father and about the way in which he had been infected. I therefore did not come out with very good grades and I certainly did not reach my potential in this regard.

21. I was already working during the weekends and had a part time job in retail whilst also studying at Art College. However, I had to leave College after only 2-3 weeks of starting the course because I was worried about my father and I knew that I needed to work on a full time basis to support him. I was also aware that I needed to stay at home to care for his needs because my father was mentally unable to deal with anything in his life, other than to live one day at a time. I therefore took up a full time role in my then part time retail job.

22. As my father's infections took their toll, his mental state became extremely fragile and therefore Cheryl and I often took the role of the parent trying to reason with him. He tried to take his life on a number of occasions as he was unable to deal with his declining physical state and poor quality of life. My father told me that he had medication in the fridge that could finish him off.

23. My father was prescribed AZT and other medications which left him bed ridden for days, altered his appearance and also had a huge effect on his mental state. I vividly remember that his tablets were like Lego bricks.

24. My father also suffered from extreme exhaustion and fatigue.
25. He developed cirrhosis which then progressed to cancer of the liver. He was unable to undergo chemotherapy due to his HIV infection.
26. My father had to move from the Midlands to Devon due to the stigma surrounding HIV after he confided in, who he thought were, close friends about his condition. This was very hard for my father as he was a private man. Unfortunately, one of the "*friends*" he confided in spoke openly about my father's infections which meant that we had to uproot and move over 100 miles away. This was very difficult for Cheryl and me because the family home was sold and we were effectively homeless and had to find somewhere to live which meant renting a property.
27. The whole family was broken following my parent's divorce, which occurred due to our mother living in fear of being infected. My mother walked out on us when I was aged about 10 or 11 and Cheryl was aged about 8 or 9. My father pleaded with my mother to tell us that she was going but she did not even manage to do that. I remember that the last thing my mother said to me was that she was popping out to the shops and she would be back soon. I never saw her again until I randomly bumped into her when I was aged 18 at a petrol station. I think I said something like "*hello mother*" in a sarcastic manner and she said something like "*oh son, I didn't recognise you*".
28. After my mother walked out on us, my poor father had to endure numerous visits from social services and accusations that he was preventing Cheryl and me from seeing our mother. Cheryl and I had to have meetings with social workers and tell them that we did not want to see our mother. Eventually the matter went to court and our mother admitted that she did not want us; it had all been about ensuring that she got some money.
29. In stark contrast to my mother's actions, my father never gave up on us and never would. He knew that he was not going to be around for very long so he ensured that we grew up quickly and that we would be able to fend for

ourselves in the world. Some might call it tough love but I totally understood what my father was doing and I admired him all the more for it.

30. We had no contact with our mother's side of the family because they completely disowned us. We initially had some contact with my father's side of the family but this contact stopped fairly abruptly because my father became very bitter following his diagnoses, which was entirely understandable.

31. I do struggle and I am aware that it is not easy on my wife who has to deal with the effects of me losing my father at such a young age. It has been really hard growing up and knowing, since my early teenage years, that my father had a terminal illness which was caused by absolutely no wrongdoing on his part. My father was given these infections by the establishments who were meant to be looking after him.

32. About 4 years ago I developed chronic headaches for which I attended my GP about. She told me that my anger had basically destroyed the nerve endings in my head. She described me as a "*clenched fist*". I struggled to function for about a year after this and I was prescribed amitriptyline which has helped somewhat.

33. I feel cheated that my father was never able to see me get married and I am sad that we lost our family unit at a young age and I miss my father.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

34. My father always felt that he was a lost cause and the impression he gained from his dealings with the medical professionals was that they were too busy and had too many other problems and therefore failed to support my father.

35. I do not think that my mother or father were offered any counselling or psychiatric support.

36. Cheryl and I have never been offered any counselling or psychiatric support either during his diagnoses or following his death.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

37. I believe that my father received one off payments from the MacFarlane Trust as and when he was in need.

38. I believe that my father received the Stage 1 payment from the Skipton Fund. I was my father's next of kin and I received the Stage 2 payment and also the "top-up" lump sum payment of £25,000 on 10th May 2011. I distributed the money evenly between the siblings.

39. I remember my father's frustrations when he applied for financial assistance. He was an extremely proud man who had a loving marriage and a very good job; all to be lost through no fault of his own. He often said that he felt like he was begging for what he felt should rightfully be his.

Section 8. Other Issues/Conclusion

40. I believe that my father was party to the HIV litigation that ended in 1991. He had to sign a waiver in order to obtain the approximately £80,000 payment.

41. My father was also part of the European Blood Factor Litigation in 2003 with Lieff, Cabrase, Heimann and Bernstein LLP.

42. I want the Inquiry to hold people accountable for their wrongdoings. I want these people to be prosecuted and dealt with properly.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

43. I do not wish to be anonymous and I want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-C

Dated.....

20/2/2019