

Witness Name: J A Stott
Statement No: WITN2980001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: July 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JOHN ANTHONY STOTT

I, John Anthony Stott, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is John Anthony Stott of GRO-C
GRO-C I was born on GRO-C 1958. I am currently not working on the grounds of ill-health.
2. I make this statement on behalf of my late mother, Pauline Mary Stott, who was born on GRO-C 1935 and died on 15 March 1974 aged only 39. My mother contracted Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated blood products and passed away as a result of liver and renal failure.
3. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my mother's medical records.** If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How Affected

4. My mother received a blood transfusion during surgery to replace an aortic valve at Manchester Hospital under the care of Mr Jack Behrens. I do not recall when this blood transfusion took place but as far as I am aware she required it because she had lost a lot of blood during the surgery. I do know this was the only blood transfusion that she received.
5. I was too young to understand the details surrounding the operation that my mother required. After the operation my younger sister and I were the only siblings to see her because the other two siblings were too young to visit her. I recall that she looked yellow when we saw her and she suffered from jaundice.
6. I cannot believe that my mother was aware of any risk of infection because she would not have agreed to the surgery.
7. On a Friday evening only a few nights after my mother's surgery, my father told my siblings and me that she had passed away. We had only seen her at the hospital a couple of nights before and we didn't expect to be told that our mother had died. We did not get the chance to say goodbye to her in the chapel of rest because the staff at the hospital had sealed her coffin. I understand this was due to the infection but I was too young to know at that time.
8. My father was made aware that the blood transfusion infected my mother with Hepatitis C which subsequently caused her death. We were so young at that time and we were not made aware until we were much older.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. I do not know whether my mother was exposed to any other infections following the blood transfusion.

Section 4. Consent

10. My mother was unable to give consent to the blood transfusion given the nature of the circumstances under which it was given to her.

Section 5. Impact

11. I had only just turned 16 years old when my mother passed away. I was her favourite child and we had a great relationship. Losing her has had such a profound effect on my life and since then I have kept myself to myself.

12. I felt robbed of my childhood and I have grown up feeling that the world owed me something. I used to feel jealous when I saw other children getting involved in activities with their own mums because my mum was no longer here with me. If my children ever burst out in an argument and in the heat of the moment told their mother that they hated her I wouldn't accept that behaviour.

13. I feel a great sense of injustice knowing that my mother went through such a big operation and suffered so gravely as a consequence of contracting Hepatitis C. We have missed having a mother and she has missed out on watching her children grow up.

14. People gathered at my mother's funeral but afterwards everyone just disappeared. After the funeral I went to her grave on my own. I have never been able to bring myself to go and see her again.

15. Hepatitis C wasn't a known fact so we didn't discuss it with people. We told people that she had died as a result of receiving bad blood during the operation.

16. I used to be an outgoing person prior to my mother's death and I became very withdrawn as a result. I did well at school up until that point in my life and

when my mother died I became rebellious. My father used to take his frustrations as a result of my mother's death out on me because I was the eldest son. My father couldn't cope with her death and he would drink alcohol frequently.

17. My siblings and I looked after each other although our friendships crumbled as a result of our mother's death. My sister, Christine, got married at a young age to get away from our family. My brother, Brian, and I did not get on. He continued living at home and I went to live with my grandparents until I joined the army at the age of 18.

18. Now, my siblings and I get on better than ever and we all have a strong relationship. My brother joined the RAF and he speaks fluent Welsh. He has three children. My sister has also done well with her life. She has got divorced and remarried.

19. I think I would have been locked up because of my rebellious behaviour following my mother's death had I not been accepted into the army. In the army I was trained to be a land surveyor which was a job I enjoyed. However I could not get a job in surveying when I left the army as I found that I was more qualified than the person who interviewed me. I took a job as a delivery driver. I didn't enjoy that job but then I ended up working as a sales representative and I enjoyed that more. Subsequently, I bought a taxi and became a taxi driver.

20. My father continued drinking although he never missed work. He also used to work at the weekends to keep the family afloat. He was a charitable man at the pub but never a charitable man at home. My relationship with my father broke down completely. I did not speak with him for years and I did not invite him to my wedding. When my children were born I felt it was unfair that he could not see them and I made contact with him. He used to work as an electrician for a nuclear power station and he was a very clever man. Our relationship remained unsteady and when he died approximately 3 or 4 years

ago I felt very sorry for him. He had a few relationships following my mother's death but none of them were long lasting or particularly serious.

21. I was in good health until approximately 6 years ago until I started suffering from pins and needles. I ignored the symptoms for some time but did eventually go to see my GP. I was referred for a scan and subsequently diagnosed with spinal stenosis which is a degenerative condition. I lost a lot of weight and my immune system is now very weak. Essentially my body doesn't produce any adrenaline. I have had several spinal surgeries and recently I had an operation to have my spine reattached with a metal rod.

22. I am currently suffering with an infection in my wound following my last operation but despite that my recovery is going well. The nurses attend my home three times a day and give me antibiotics and an IV to fight off a serious infection. I do not know how long this will go on but it has been an unpleasant experience.

23. I am able to walk but unfortunately not very far.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

24. I was never offered any counselling as a result of losing my mother at such a young age.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

25. We never received any financial assistance following my mother's death and following finding out that she had been infected with Hepatitis C.

Section 8. Other Issues

26. I would like to know how the blood was obtained and why it wasn't screened for infections before it was given to patients in the UK.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

27. I do not wish to apply for anonymity.

28. I would not be prepared 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

30/08/2019