

Witness Name: Marion Theresa English

Statement No:WITN3007001

Exhibits:0

Dated: December 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARION THERESA ENGLISH

I, Marion Theresa English, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Marion Theresa English (Mary). I was born on [GRO-C] 1962. I live with my partner at [GRO-C] Belfast [GRO-C]
2. I make this statement as an affected person and in relation to my mother, Mary Theresa McVicker, who was born on [GRO-C] 1943 and died on 22nd February 2014. She was infected with Hepatitis C (HCV) following a blood transfusion she received after the birth of my twin brothers.
3. I have five sisters and two brothers and I am the second eldest.
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Mum's medical records. I understand that my sister Bridget Clarke and my brother Matt McVicker have also given statements to the Inquiry.

Section 2. How Affected

5. My twin brothers, Matt and Christopher were born at The Mater Informorum Hospital in Belfast on GRO-C 1971. I believe that Mum had a normal delivery but subsequently required a blood transfusion.

6. Mum was a very strong individual and did not share many problems with us.

7. Mum had various illnesses in her lifetime but when she was in her late 50s early 60s they began to get worse.

8. She began to feel very tired all the time but put this down to having had 8 children. She had had her gallbladder removed and had also had to have an urgent hysterectomy.

9. Eventually her GP sent her for blood tests and her liver function levels were found to be raised. As a consequence of this she went for a liver biopsy which confirmed that she had Hepatitis C. Her doctor told her that she had acquired this as a result of the blood transfusion in 1971.

Section 3. Other Infections

10. I am not aware that she contracted any other illness as a result of the contaminated blood.

Section 4. Consent.

11. Mum didn't tell us about the trauma involved during the birth of my twin brothers. I am therefore not able to comment as to whether she gave consent to a blood transfusion and whether or not she was given any advice as to the risk of it.

Section 5. Impact

12. Mum had a house in Donegal which she loved to go to. She would always be independent and drive herself before she was ill. Prior to her diagnosis she was full of energy and loved going to different places.
13. Slowly she began to drive less and stopped going places; she did not want to go out.
14. In the early 2000s my partner and I had bought a new house which we had moved into. However, Mum began to be afraid to be on her own despite the fact that she was living in a place called GRO-C which was a home for elderly able bodied people. She had been employed as the warden there until her illness had developed and she was no longer able to work in that capacity. She stayed on in the home as a resident but was no longer employed by them.
15. It was in or around 2007 when my partner and I moved in with Mum to help her. We would clean and generally look after her with her chores; washing and ironing and preparing meals. I would help her with her personal hygiene.
16. I would go with Mum to her hospital appointments and ensure that she took her medication.
17. We would take it in turns to look after her through the night.
18. At the same time I had a full time job at Stormont. I had to leave this so that I could be nearer to home and I started working in the City Centre so that I would be nearer to home and was able to get back quickly when needed.
19. In 2010 my daughter had a child; my first grandchild. I felt guilty because I was then pulled in all directions with looking after my Mum and my daughter also needing help. I remember it being a bad winter with work and personal life and trying to juggle everything.
20. My partner and I stayed with Mum until she died in 2014. Towards the end of her life I didn't really sleep for more than 2 hours a night. Mum had awful swelling as a result of fluid build up. My partner helped too. Mum got to the stage where she couldn't do anything.

21. I juggled my work, using my annual leave to look after Mum. I didn't have any leisure time. Mum was so afraid. There was no care offered to her but I wanted to take care of her.

22. I do not think Mum was treated well. It is difficult to look back now and see how much she suffered. In the end she was unable to move.

23. Her illness and death had a huge impact on the whole family. We suffered through no fault of her own and she was deprived of enjoying her new grandchildren. She suffered hugely towards the end of her life by not being able to get to her own bedroom and not being able to do things for herself. She went from being a strong, independent person to relying on others to look after her.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

24. We provided the care and support that she needed. We were offered no assistance. I do not know whether or not she was offered counselling.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

25. I believe that she did not receive any funding following her diagnosis.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

26. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

27. I do not wish 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

Marion Theresa English

Dated 11.12.19