

Witness Name: Mary Mullen

Statement No.: W2225

Exhibits: **WITN0031001**

Dated: 16/11/2018

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARY MULLEN

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 16 November 2018.

I, Mary Mullen, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Mary Mullen. My date of birth is GRO-C 1953. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am retired and divorced. I intend to speak about my friend Maria Armour. In particular, the nature of if her illness, how the illness affected her, the treatment received and the impact it had on her and our lives together.

Section 2. How Affected

2. I have known Maria Armour since we were children. I am a little older than Maria. We both grew up in Govanhill. We have been friends all our lives.
3. Maria was infected through a blood transfusion. I am not sure why she went hospital and required this transfusion. I believe this was about 25 years ago. I believe it used to be the Samaritan Hospital. I remember is that she was taken into hospital and given a transfusion. She became so ill.
4. Following this time in hospital Maria was diagnosed with Lupus. I believe that she was diagnosed with this around the same time as she was diagnosed with hepatitis C. I am unsure if these are linked. She also has fibromyalgia that I am unaware as to whether or not this is related to her hepatitis C.
5. All Maria's conditions seemed to appear after her transfusion. She had flulike symptoms. I believe at first we thought that she had a cold but she very quickly went downhill. That cold and the symptoms were constant from then on.
6. I believe that it was in the 1990s when Maria was diagnosed with hepatitis C. I am unable to be more specific than that. I believe that she went into hospital in the late 80s or early 90s. I do not believe it was long after her transfusion that she found out about her hepatitis diagnosis. Due to this diagnosis Maria give up her job in social work.
7. Maria lost a huge amount of weight around this time and continues to lose weight and struggles to maintain her weight. I believe the she is a size four now. I am unable to estimate what size she would have been prior to this.
8. It was as if Maria constantly had the flu. She could get better for a little bit then it would come back. I have never seen a change in a person like this.

9. When Maria found out about her diagnosis I believe that she told her immediate family first and then me. I recall that she was breaking her heart to me crying. She told me everything. I would go with her and her mum Margaret Wilson to the haemophilia clinic. It was devastating for the family. It was one of those things where you just do not know what to say to them. I believe Maria had lots of support from family and friends such as myself.
10. I believe that when Maria was told that she had the infection she was merely given leaflets. Sometime after this she started having hospital appointments to receive treatment. I do not know when exactly this happened, nor the name of the treatment. I believe for her Lupus she is on pills. I am still unsure if the lupus diagnosis is related to hepatitis C. I do not believe that they gave Maria enough information. I still feel that they were hiding things from her. They may still be hiding things from her. At no point am I aware of them accepting any blame for her condition. One of the hardest things was initial shock of her hepatitis C diagnosis. There really was not a lot of information given. I do not think they even wanted to give her advice.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. I believe that she was given a leaflet and just sent on her way. I am unsure about any tests done without consent. She did go to hospital for tests over time.

Section 4. Consent

12. I believe that she was given a leaflet and just sent on her way. I am unsure about any tests done without consent. She did go to hospital for tests over time. I do not know exactly when or what hospital

13. In terms of how Maria is coping I would say there this has all been mental torture for her. She is the sort of person that does not like to say when she is in pain. This pain is constant. This is worse when she has a fibromyalgia flare-up. It is such a shame when you see the her lupus has flared up.
14. The physical effects on Maria has mostly been that she has lost weight and is very weak. She was very happy-go-lucky before and does not go out anymore. She has a daughter and grandkids that will go visit her and try to perk her up.
15. I have noticed that Maria does have issues concentrating and does forget things. With her appetite she does not eat very much. She loses her appetite for days on end. She's always cold as well and I believe that this is as a result of hepatitis C and possibly her lupus as well.
16. It feels as if Maria is 55 going on 100. She does not go out to socialise. Maria was a bit of a party girl before her diagnosis. She used to go out to the plaza with me. She just does not go out anymore. We go along to see each other every now and then I am aware of Maria trying to hide the pain from me.
17. Maria has two daughters. She has Jade who is older and has two children and Laura who is younger and has one child.
18. I believe this did have an impact on Maria's family life. Her children were very young when she started experiencing symptoms of hepatitis C. Jade would have been about four or

five and Laura may have just been a baby. She did bring her daughters up well and brought them up herself.

19. Family life was impacted a lot. She would get the girls ready for school and would have to go back to bed once she had taken them to school because she was so worn out by this. Her daughters are very good with her. I feel that Maria was less able to be there for them than she might have been. I believe the daughters knew that she was not well and understood this. Even when the girls were school-age they still had to look at their mum. Maria's own mum and sisters were also a great help as well.
20. I do not believe that Maria's condition had any effect on her daughter's school performance.
21. I believe that Maria quite quickly got treatments for her hepatitis C and lupus. I believe she has been on these treatments regularly from then on. I am unsure of the name of any of these treatments. I am unaware if Maria's hepatitis C has affected her liver. I am aware that she found the treatment very draining.
22. I feel that Maria has felt subject to the stigma that surrounds hepatitis C. She avoids talking about it and only really discusses this with me and her family. People know that she does not keep well, but are aware that she has health issues.
23. I am not aware of Maria having any counselling. I'm just really not sure. I cannot remember.
24. Maria gave up social work after she was diagnosed. I believe that between when she received the transfusion and when she was diagnosed she just struggled but got on with things. Maria would have been good social worker had she kept working.

I believe that Maria would have continued in this job had she not become ill. She was quite ambitious.

25. When Maria is well she can have the grandchildren stay but when she is ill they have to go back because she is not up to looking after them overnight. As I said before she has good days and bad days.
26. I do not feel there was enough support from the medical professionals that dealt with Maria.
27. Maria's GP is the same as mine, Dr Cummings at Govanhill health centre. They have generally been good about everything as far as I'm aware. I do not think they were involved with Maria's diagnosis.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

28. As I have said, Maria was simply given a leaflet as far as I am aware. I do not believe counselling was offered. I do not believe that this was adequate.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

29. In terms of funding from any bodies I am unsure of the name of any of

these bodies and I am not fully aware of what funds Maria has received. I do think that she used some funding she received from an organisation to do up her house. This is because she was told she was getting a new build due to her having lived with mice for years in her flat. She was told to do up her house and then she could move to the new build. This has been taken away from her and added to her stress. This is a personal

vendetta against Maria. We both have helped run the campaign for cleaning up GRO-C. They promised her a new flat. Maria has been too weak to march in terms of the regeneration work we have done.

30. In terms of any funding I believe that there may have been something through a contaminated blood fund. I do not know. I think there is a winter fuel fund the Maria is able to use and I think she used this for doing up her flat. I believe that Maria may have got funding from Skipton but am not aware when this was received nor how much she received. I do not believe that what has been offered through funds has been sufficient. I'm not aware of the application process. It does help that it does slightly compensate.

Section 8. Other Issues

31. I do not believe I have anything further to add.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

18/1/2019.