



NOT RELEVANT

Witness Name: David Thomson

Statement No.: WITN2275001

Exhibits:

Dated: 3rd January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF DAVID THOMSON

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated the 5th November 2018.

I, David Thomson, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is David Thomson. My date of birth is the GRO-C 1964. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am currently married with no children; my wife is called Shona Thomson. We have been married for 21 years. I intend to speak about my infection of hepatitis C as a result of receiving infected blood products, in particular the nature of the illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on my family and I. I do not wish to be anonymous for this statement.

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Section 2. How Infected

2. I am diagnosed with haemophilia type A, I was considered to be severe when I was six months old. I had no treatment when I was a baby and when I was older I started to receive treatment in the form of a blood transfusion and then it moved onto receiving blood products.
3. At the moment I am on refacto AF. The infection took place in the late 1970s and early 1980s at which point I was receiving factor VIII. I cannot give you any further details on this, the information would have to be contained within my medical records.
4. I was given my blood products at Raigmore hospital Inverness, I am also registered at Riverside medical practice, Inverness. I just see whatever doctor is on duty when I attend there.
5. I was given the infected products in the late 1970s early 1980s because that was when the heat treating of the product was not occurring. The clotting products are now synthetic; it is difficult to say otherwise when I was infected. Because I have haemophilia, I get regular checks. I usually get checked every six months or so. After one of these checks it was flagged up that there was hepatitis C present in my blood. Diagnosis took place in 1996. There were no symptoms present at the time, the virus was very much active though. I cannot recall the full details of what happened.
6. There was never any mention about the risk of being exposed to infection from the blood products. There was no mention of the heat treatments, definitely not to either myself or my parents at the time. The conversation was focused around the treatment you needed to have when you had a bleed.
7. I was referred to another consultant at Raigmore Hospital, Patrick Zentler-Munro, he laid out the problems that could arise with the

hepatitis C in the long term and explained that it could cause cancer and liver damage etc. The information I was provided in that appointment was adequate.

8. From the time I got the letter saying I needed to attend the clinic and the appointment it wasn't a long waiting time at all. I was happy with the waiting period and I was told about the infection in an appropriate manner.
9. The results of the test was communicated very well to me by my doctor.
10. We were given information about the risks of others being infected, things like not to drink out of the same container, protection when having sex, that sort of thing.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. Just after the millennium, either year 2000 or 2001 I received a letter advising me that there was a risk that I had been exposed to variant CJD. The same letter told me that there was no test available to confirm this diagnosis and the purpose of the letter was to inform me that I should be aware there was a slight risk. At the time I had just got rid of the hepatitis C so it was quite a shock. The letter said it was just a very slight risk and I have not thought about it over the years.

Section 4. Consent

12. I had to use the products whether I liked it or not. I didn't know about heat treatment in the 1980s and 1970s. I believe I was treated without my knowledge though because there was hepatitis C tested in my blood without my knowledge and I didn't find out until afterwards that they had tested me.

13. It follows above that if they tested me without my knowledge, they tested me without my consent, however I don't see how consent comes into it for this because I did require it.
14. For every batch of factor VIII that came into the hospital there was a list of side-effects. You were aware of what you were injecting but nothing about viruses and heat treatment was mentioned. It was just a standard medication; every batch comes with a datasheet which told you about the potential side-effects. I treat myself now so I receive all the information myself now with the products.
15. I don't believe I have been tested for research, this was something I needed, it was necessary.

Section 5. Impact

16. It was quite a shock when I was diagnosed hepatitis C. Originally, I was depressed for a while but I carried on working full-time normally, it was suggested at the time that potentially I could transmit the infection to any potential children, so Shona and I made the difficult decision not to have any children. There were no real physical symptoms it was just the depression just after my diagnosis. I wasn't on any medication so it didn't last long and I continued on living normally.
17. When the treatment started, further complications came up from that but nothing directly from the hepatitis C.
18. When I saw the consultant, Patrick Zentler-Munro, he suggested interferon as a course of treatment for one year to try and kill the virus, I did that and the symptoms were really bad. I had severe flu symptoms every day for a year, I lost a lot of weight and I had no appetite. I couldn't sleep and I had very dry skin. After a year I was tested again and the virus was still detected in my system. At this point my weight had

plummeted to 9 stone. They suggested I try a combination treatment which was interferon in conjunction with ribavirin. This had the same side-effects, which ended up being two years of severe flu like symptoms. The treatment was successful this time and the virus was gone, I was declared clear in the year 2000. My medical records will have to confirm the exact dates but that is around the correct time. I was able to manage to continue working through the treatment for the full time.

19. I have never faced any difficulties in accessing any treatments. I think I was given the treatment that was available at the time.
20. There was no other impact upon any other medical conditions, the treatment was very good.
21. It is depressing to begin with when you're diagnosed with hepatitis C, there is a stigma attached to it, a lot of people think if you have hepatitis C you must then have HIV for some reason, it didn't affect me too much otherwise. A lot of the general public didn't understand the condition and what it was all about originally. Shona was very supportive throughout all of this, all she could do was accept the situation as it was and supported me through treatment.
22. I don't really speak about hepatitis C with other people, I spoke to a few of my work colleagues and they were very understanding.
23. I just carried on working throughout the whole course of my treatment and the whole time. It was not easy when I was under treatment to drag myself out of bed to work but I still did it. During my illness I had been an electrical contractor storeman, checking and receiving stock for heavy duty goods; I was a forklift driver, I worked in fairly physical roles. I was made redundant two months ago and now I am looking for a job at the moment.
24. When I went through treatment, I can't remember what we did

financially. It didn't make too much of a difference though because I was still working full-time during the treatment and Shona works full-time as well as a dental nurse.

25. I know Shona found it quite emotional watching me go through the treatment but she supported me fully and that helped me get through this period.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

26. There were no difficulties with treatment, I was pleased with my treatment, psychological support was made available to me but I declined it as I felt I didn't need it. No psychological support was offered to the family but in our case we don't feel it would have been helpful. If my wife needed support she would get this herself as she works for the NHS.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. I was informed by letter there was financial assistance available from the NSS. I can't remember exactly when I received this letter. They have contacted me however.
28. I received £20,000 from the Government. I received a further £30,000 in November 2016 from the Skipton fund as well.
29. I didn't apply for support, they contacted me, there was no form filling, there was a little bit of form filling with the Skipton fund but that was it, it was all standard.
30. There were no difficulties, obstacles or preconditions applied in applying for financial assistance.
31. I think there should be a bigger pay out in line with Ireland and more of a compensation award, given what has happened over the years.

Section 8. Other Issues

32. Thompsons Solicitor have recovered my medical records and have given me the opportunity to review them.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

09.03.19