

Witness Name: John Wickham

Statement No.: WITN2319001

Exhibits: NONE

Dated: 9th January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JOHN WICKHAM

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated the 9th January 2019.

I, John Wickham, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is John Wickham. My date of birth is the GRO-C 1946. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am living at home with my wife Maureen who I've been married to for 45 years. I intend to speak about my infection of hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had my family and I. I would like it noted that over the years I've had a number of seizures which has led to the diagnosis of epilepsy. I do have multiple seizures in the daytime and this has meant that my memory is severely damaged, Maureen will be

supporting me for this statement and there are a lot of details I can no longer tell you.

Section 2. How Infected

2. I was involved in an accident in 1986 on a motorbike when a car ran into me and I broke my hip. This had to be operated on and after I was admitted to the Royal Infirmary Edinburgh, Lauriston Place I had two operations to fix it. The first operation did not work, so I had to get a second operation. In one of those operations I needed to have a blood transfusion, this operation took place in August 1986. After several days I was admitted to the Princess Margaret Rose for 5-6 weeks to recover. I don't know how many pints of blood I received and I don't know any batch numbers. All I know is that I have one leg shorter than the other. My femur was damaged. I also fractured my skull as a child. I don't know if I received a blood transfusion then as well, I cannot recall exactly when I fractured my skull and I don't know if I received a blood transfusion.
3. I knew I'd had a transfusion but there was never any discussion about the risks associated with receiving blood.
4. In the late 1980s, there was evidence that came out from the Scottish Blood Transfusion Service that contacted me and said that they had evidence I had hepatitis C. They referred me on to the Edinburgh Royal infirmary. I was then told that I was infected during the operation that I had years previously. They could see however that I had spontaneously cleared. So there were no ill effects that I experienced.
5. Yes, the information was adequate as I had spontaneously cleared so there was no problem. We didn't know what hepatitis C was, I still don't really know what it is other than what you see on TV.
6. No, the information was provided to me when they found out that I was infected and I had spontaneously cleared so there were no delays.

7. I don't have any views about how the results were communicated to me, it was fine. I was oblivious to hepatitis C and I was oblivious until I donated the blood and the Scottish blood transfusion service contacted me. They didn't know who the original donor was and they were doing investigations to try and find who this was, as far as I'm aware, I have no more information about this.
8. There was no discussion about the risks of passing infection on to anyone else as I had spontaneously cleared so it was not applicable.

Section 3. Other Infections

9. I have never received any information that I have had any other infections from the infected blood.

Section 4. Consent

10. I don't believe that I've been treated or tested without my knowledge.
11. No I don't believe I have been treated or tested without my consent.
12. No I don't believe I've been treated or tested without being given full or adequate information, I spontaneously cleared so that was really all the information I received.
13. No I don't believe I have been treated tested for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact

14. The only thing that I have been really affected with his epilepsy. I was diagnosed with this about 7 or 8 years ago, it's all in my notes, there has been no discussion if this is related to hepatitis C so I am unaware of

any other effects of hepatitis C itself. They have never tested me since then to see if it was in my bloodstream, they just advised me that there were traces detected and they have warned me that it may come back later in life. I do have chronic fatigue however, this may be an age-related thing. I sleep on and off throughout the day and this may be related to age or epilepsy. There are no other effects because I spontaneously cleared and was not aware of anything until that point.

15. I don't know if there have been any other effects from hepatitis C other than what covered in point 14.
16. I've had no treatment because I spontaneously cleared.
17. There were no obstacles, this question is not applicable to me.
18. No, as I spontaneously cleared so this is not applicable either, treatment was not required.
19. There have never been any consequences for any other medical treatment for any other conditions, they just proceed as normal. I don't tell other doctors that I've had this as I spontaneously cleared many years ago and it's never come up again.
20. There haven't been really any effects on my private, family or social life, it happened so long ago I don't tell anyone. I never go out now anyway but that's because of my epilepsy and age. I never mention it to friends or anything.
21. There are no educational affects that apply.
22. When I was working, I was a camera operator for a printing company, there was no effect to my career.
23. There have been no financial effects that are applicable as I

spontaneously cleared and I worked normally.

24. My private, family and social life have not been affected because I spontaneously cleared and hepatitis C has been more of a piece of information I received in my life rather than having a big detrimental effect however, I do think it's disgraceful that I received contaminated blood at all.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

25. When I was diagnosed with epilepsy, I had to stop driving and the doctor told me about disability living allowance, I had to also pack in my job at the time. This was about 8 years ago though. All other support has come from my wife, Maureen. No psychological support was offered to me when I was told about hepatitis C and it's not something I feel would have made a difference to me. I take a lot of seizures now and I am on tablets every day, around seven tablets a day because of the epilepsy.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

26. I've never heard of the Skipton fund and I have never applied for any financial support as a result of this. None of the other questions in this section will be applicable to me.

Section 8. Other Issues

27. I have no other issues that I wish to bring to Inquiry's attention, Thompsons solicitors are to recover my medical records for which I'll be given an opportunity to review.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated *✓* 14.2.19