

Witness Name: Jean Elizabeth Miller

Statement No.: WITN3483001

Exhibits: WITN3483002 - 008

Dated: 27th September, 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JEAN ELIZABETH MILLER

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 19th July, 2019.

I, Jean Elizabeth Miller, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Jean Elizabeth Miller. My date of birth is GRO-C 1949. I am a retired nurse. I intend to speak about my late husband, James Brian Miller. My husband's first name was James but he was known as Brian. I intend to speak about my husband contracting hepatitis C by being given infected blood products. The hepatitis C caused my husband to get cirrhosis of the liver which was a contributory factor to his death. I intend to speak about the nature of his illness, how the illness affected him, the treatment he received and the impact it had on us both and our lives together.
2. I can confirm that I have appointed Thompsons solicitors to be my legal representative. I can confirm that the Inquiry should send all correspondence regarding me to Thompsons.

Section 2. How Affected

3. My husband Brian and I were together for twenty five years. We met through a small Christian church group in 1993 and married that same year. We lived in GRO-C Glasgow. We did not have any children.
4. Brian suffered from severe haemophilia type A. When he lived in Glasgow, Brian would attend the Glasgow Royal infirmary on a regular basis when he had a bleed. He received a lot of Factor VIII blood products. On one of these occasions the Factor VIII blood product was contaminated and as a result Brian contracted hepatitis C.
5. Before Brian and I were married he told me that he had previously developed hepatitis C as a result of being given contaminated blood. He said he had cleared the infection. I knew a little about hepatitis as I had a nursing background. It was referred to back then as non-A, non-B hepatitis. Brian told me that the hepatitis had made him very ill on and off for eighteen months but that eventually the infection had cleared. I knew back then, that the treatment for hepatitis C was interferon injections and that the treatment itself had severe side-effects. Brian told me that an Indian doctor who he saw, did not believe in using medical products or drugs to treat hepatitis C. The Indian doctor had recommended complete bed rest. Brian had taken his advice and he said that eventually the infection cleared.
6. Brian was infected with hepatitis C before we met and therefore I cannot comment on who treated him. I note in Brian's medical notes a letter dated 13 May 1976 stating that Brian had hepatitis and that it was a post-transfusion hepatitis caused by an unidentified agent and a follow up letter on the 25th May 1976. I produce a copy of this letter in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3483002**.
7. Brian told me that he received very little information about hepatitis C when he was first diagnosed. I knew that it could be passed on through

sexual intercourse so I was tested at the Royal Infirmary, Glasgow in 1995 and was found to be negative. There is a letter in Brian's medical notes referring to my hepatitis check dated the 26 January 1995 and a follow up check dated the 20th February 1995. I produce this letter in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3483003**.

Section 3. Other infections

8. Brian did not receive any other infection as a result of being given contaminated blood products he was only infected with hepatitis C. I know that he was tested for HIV at some stage. This is documented in his medical notes. I produce a copy of a letter from Professor Lowe at the haemophilia centre, Glasgow Royal infirmary that refers to a consultation that took place on the 2nd July 1996. I refer to this as **WITN3483004**.
9. I know that Brian was told he was at risk of having vCJD as a consequence of being given contaminated blood. There is a letter in Brian's medical records referring to this. I produce this letter in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3483005**.
10. Brian was told he was at risk of having variant CJD but he did not believe he had it. Brian had a post-mortem after he died. There was no mention of vCJD.

Section 4. Consent

11. I do not know if Brian was ever tested or treated without his knowledge or consent. I do not know if he was ever treated or tested for the purpose of research.

Section 5. Impact

12. Brian told me when he had hepatitis C, he was very ill. Physically he said it made him extremely nauseous.
13. Brian believed that he had cleared the hepatitis C and that his liver function was normal I refer to a letter in his records dated the 3rd March 1997 and refer to it as **WITN3483006**. I note from his medical records that he had an ultrasound on his liver in April 1997 and that his liver was normal. I produce a copy of this result in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3483007**. However, his post-mortem revealed that Brian had cirrhosis of the liver caused by the hepatitis C and that this contributed to his death. I produce a copy of Brian's death certificate in evidence and refer to it as **WITN3483008**. Brian and I did not know he had cirrhosis of the liver. It came as a huge shock to me when I saw it on his death certificate. The hepatitis C had caused Brian to have cirrhosis of the liver and this ultimately cost him his life.
14. Brian believed he was clear of hepatitis C. When I met him, he told me that just before the AIDS scandal happened in the media, he had a bad reaction to Factor VIII. He was taken off it and put on cryoprecipitate. He always said that the bad reaction was a gift from God because coming off Factor VIII meant he avoided getting AIDS.
15. Brian didn't tell anyone that he had previously been infected with hepatitis C. This was due to the stigma associated with it. Brian knew it was associated with intravenous drugs users and homosexuality. He did not want to be associated with this so he chose not to tell anyone.
16. Brian was my best friend, we were inseparable and together 24/7. We didn't have a family. It really was just me and him facing the world. Now that Brian has gone, I feel like my whole life has evaporated. I am still grieving and I haven't come to terms with his death.
17. Brian took care of all our finances. He even kept track of my bank account. He took care of all our bills. Since he has gone I have felt lost and overwhelmed with the prospect of managing my own finances.

18. It was haemophilia not hepatitis that made it impossible for Brian to continue to work. His bleeds in his joints left him with severe arthritis. Brian told me that he had severe haemophilia when we met. His haemophilia had given him severe arthritis and he was unable to work.

Section 6. Treatment care support

19. I do not know if Brian was offered any counselling or psychological support when he was diagnosed with hepatitis C.

20. After Brian died I got in touch with Legal and General as Brian had a life insurance policy with them. When they saw that the cause of his death was cirrhosis they initially refused to pay out. They said Brian had not declared this condition to them. I was petrified they wouldn't pay out because I needed the money to pay for his funeral. I had to explain that Brian did not know he had cirrhosis, no one had told him. Eventually they did pay out.

Section 7. Financial assistance

21. I do not know how Brian found out that he was entitled to financial assistance. Brian spent a lot of time on the computer so I'm sure this is how he found out.

22. As I said earlier on my statement Brian dealt with all our finances. I can make no comment on the process of applying for financial assistance.

23. In 2005, Brian received a £20,000 lump sum. I do not know what fund he received this from. In the last few years he also received £30,000. He also received £1000 living allowance every year. On the 15th April 2020 I received a lump sum payment from SIBSS and the first instalment of a monthly allowance from SIBSS which

would have been paid to my late husband Brian, had his liver condition been known while he was alive.

24. I have no real comment to make about the financial assistance Brian received. It certainly does not compensate for the loss of his life. As for me no amount of money could compensate for the loss of Brian. I have to face my life alone without my best friend. I am truly heartbroken.

Section 8. Other issues

25. I do not wish to remain anonymous in this Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated *1st May 2020*