

Witness Name: Angela Stephanie Harrison

Statement No: WITN3850001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: July 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ANGELA STEPHANIE HARRISON

I, Angela Stephanie Harrison, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Angela Stephanie Harrison. I was born on GRO-C 1964 and I live at GRO-C Manchester GRO-C.
2. My brother, Gary Norman Fitzpatrick (born on GRO-C 1969), was co-infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Hepatitis Virus (I am not sure which type) through contaminated blood products. Gary developed AIDS and died on GRO-C 1993, aged 23.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Gary's full medical records.

4. My mother and two sisters have provided Witness Statements to the Inquiry (Witness Numbers WITN3513001, WITN3852001 and WITN3855001)

Section 2. How Affected

5. I have two sisters (one older and one younger than me) and Gary, our only brother, was the baby of the family. Gary had severe Haemophilia A, diagnosed at 5 months old.
6. Gary was treated at Pendlebury Children's Hospital. We became very familiar with the hospital and we spent a lot of time there when Gary needed treatment for his Haemophilia. He was initially treated with cryoprecipitate to control his bleeds and then, when Gary was about 8 or 9 years old, he was given Factor VIII concentrate. His consultant was Dr Evans.
7. In 1985 when Gary was 15 or 16 our mother received a letter out of the blue saying that Gary had been tested for, and was positive for, HIV. I then accompanied my mother to a meeting at the hospital with other parents present. The meeting was supposed to be a question and answer session on understanding the implications of being infected with HIV and how to manage it. The meeting was highly emotionally charged and everyone was upset. We went away without any information to help or reassure us.
8. Some considerable time later (possibly around the date of Gary's death) it also came to light that Gary was infected with Hepatitis but it was never formally disclosed or discussed. The diagnosis was pretty much brushed over.
9. My mother and Gary were never told or made aware of any dangers or risks of infection by the use of contaminated blood products. My mother was concerned

about the potential risk (after the report of a risk was flagged up by her brother) and she raised her concern at an appointment a few years before 1985. It was immediately dismissed as something invented by the press and she was not taken seriously.

10. A letter out of the blue was a terrible way for something so important to be communicated. My mother was then just left to deal with Gary's HIV diagnosis the best she could. We kept it a secret from Gary. We didn't want to frighten him. He was so young and had so much on his plate with his haemophilia bleeds. We were 'dumped' with the news and basically left to get on with it. Gary eventually found out about it and it had a profound affect on his emotional and psychological wellbeing.

Section 3. Other Infections

11. As stated above, I confirmed that Gary was also infected with Hepatitis, although I am unsure if it was Hep C or Hep B.

Section 4. Consent

12. Gary was tested and treated without his knowledge and without consent. I believe that Gary was tested and treated without being given adequate or full information. My mother was not informed that Gary was being tested for HIV before receiving the letter informing her that he was HIV positive. We were not made aware that Gary had Hepatitis and only found out about it many years later. We therefore believe it likely that Gary was tested and treated for the purposes of research. Moreover, when Gary was involved with the AZT trial we think that he might have been treated with a placebo.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

13. The stigma associated with HIVAIDS was rife in the mid to late eighties/early nineties. The stigma really bothered Gary. People thought that you were gay if you had HIV. It was not a 'macho' thing for Gary to want to be associated with and he didn't want others to know about. Gary was not homophobic and it didn't worry me but we kept quiet for Gary's sake. There was no counselling and/or support for Gary or any of us.
14. Gary had a girlfriend, [GRO-A], whom he met at Pendlebury School. They lived together for a short time when Gary was in his late teens. That was probably Gary's happiest time (before he became very unwell). [GRO-A] was disabled with spinal muscular atrophy and Gary was then her main carer, carrying her up and downstairs and doing the shopping. When Gary was unable to care for [GRO-A] and himself at their flat he returned home.
15. Gary suffered from a catalogue of ailments and infections, such as chest infections, pneumonia, breathing difficulties, shingles, severe skin allergies and conditions including skin lesions, oral thrush, temporary blindness, eczema and psoriasis requiring tar treatment. He also suffered from extreme sweating, sickness, vomiting and diarrhoea. He lost a lot of weight, his hair became thin and he suffered with extreme fatigue and nausea.
16. The state of Gary's mental health was extremely fragile after finding out that he was infected with HIV in his late teens and it deteriorated to an appalling state over time. We later learnt that this was due to the virus attacking his brain. He became a manic depressive with episodes of depression and episodes of excitable mania that were frightening to witness in him. There were times he was so wired that he would not stop talking. He became confused and behaved erratically. I was scared that other people would take advantage of him

financially especially after he received his compensation money. I remember doing a double take after seeing Gary with his shirt off in the middle of winter driving past my work in a clapped out Bentley car he had just purchased on a whim. I was in shock because I hadn't seen the car before and Gary wasn't in a fit state of mind to be driving that car. It is a horrible image that I will never forget. He was by then emaciated through the effects of his illness. I also remember Gary [GRO-D]

[GRO-D]

[GRO-D]

[GRO-D] it was completely out of character for him to do that. It was very upsetting. I told him that we were family and he should always come to me if he needed anything.

17. Gary lost his home, his girlfriend and his independence. He lost his ability to drive and walk. He became withdrawn and isolated from his family and friends as the stigma of his illness was so negative. There was no support for him. He was actively encouraged by the medical profession to keep his HIV status secret. It very unfairly became our shameful family secret.

18. Our father [GRO-D] when Gary was in his early teens and aside from Gary (and my boyfriend) we were a household of women. My boyfriend at that time was very good with Gary. He would lift Gary in and out of the bath and we took Gary out doing things he enjoyed like to the Manchester City games (there was a disabled part of the stadium) and to Rivington in Bolton to watch the sunset there.

19. Gary had to contend with a lot of pain and it was so distressing for all of us. Cannabis was the only thing that relaxed him. He would inhale it from a plastic bottle. I didn't really approve but I wanted to help him. [GRO-C]

[GRO-C]

[GRO-C] This was a scary experience in itself.

20. Gary's end of life care was virtually non-existent. There was no formal end of life plan, no pain relief, it was shocking. His care was left pretty much to my mother. He deserved to be given home care and treatment with his dignity intact and to be given some comfort. We were even left to get Gary's final dose of morphine from the GP and administer it to him ourselves at home. That shouldn't have happened. It was as though the doctors didn't want to come to our house and had wiped their hands of Gary. A couple of days after Gary died, men in white suits and gloves came to take away Gary's mattress. It was horrendous.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

21. My brother was shunned by the medical profession, and was treated like a leper.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

22. Gary received a payment (compensation); but I cannot remember when or how much. Gary dealt with this privately. I know he felt ashamed of getting this money and didn't really want it. The money did not bring him happiness.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

23. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

24. I do not want 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: A S Harrison

Dated

17/8/2020