

Witness Name: J Dodd  
Statement No: WITN3962001  
Exhibits: 0  
Dated: February 2020

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF JEFFREY DODD

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I, Jeffrey Dodd, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Jeffrey Dodd and i was born on GRO-C 1962. I live at 5 GRO-C Wirral, GRO-C My mother, Maureen, and my father, Leslie, have also provided witness statements to the Inquiry under **WITN1743001** and **WITN1193001** respectively.
2. I make this statement as an affected brother of Graeme Jonathan Dodd, who was born on GRO-C 1966 and passed away, aged only 27, on GRO-C GRO-C 1993, as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII concentrates.
3. Graeme was infected with HIV via contaminated Factor VIII concentrates.
4. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Graeme's full medical records.**

## **Section 2. How Affected**

5. I refer to my mother's statement.

## **Section 3. Other Infections**

6. I refer to my mother's statement.

## **Section 4. Consent**

7. I refer to my mother's statement.

## **Section 5. Impact**

8. Graeme was my younger brother and we were very close. Not only was he born with Haemophilia which significantly reduced his ability to enjoy life to the fullest, he was cruelly infected with an avoidable disease as a consequence of negligence which ultimately cost him his life at a very young age.
9. My father was a very sporty guy when he was younger and then, when I came along, I was equally sporty so we used to play lots of sports together. Graeme was born when I was aged 4 ½. He was diagnosed with Haemophilia within about a year of his birth which was just as I was getting into preparatory school life and joining sports teams.
10. When Graeme was diagnosed with Haemophilia it was a very difficult time for everyone. I was quite successful at everything I did, but I did not want to boast about things such as how many wickets I had got because my little brother was poorly. Sadly, it took a lot of the enjoyment out of my achievements.
11. We were dealing with an overarching situation as a consequence of what Graeme had been born with. I felt guilty because of the way in which Haemophilia was passed down in a family, from mother to son, and that it should have been me who had to deal with these difficulties and not Graeme.

I used to look at my little brother and feel bad that he could not do what I could do. We used to play football in the garden together but there was no body contact due to Graeme's Haemophilia.

12. Graeme and I progressed through our life which involved lots of rushing to hospital when things happened to Graeme. We also had to move house so that he could attend a primary school which did not have any stairs in an attempt to keep Graeme safe. This translated into a longer bus journey for me. However, Graeme and I were very close and I was extremely supportive of him.
13. The news of Graeme's HIV diagnosis in or around 1984 came as an awful shock and impacted immensely upon the whole family. My parents were more involved in things at this time because I was away at university. Things quickly developed into a terrible nightmare over a relatively short period of time.
14. There was a good deal of scaremongering in relation to HIV and the press were running some horrific stories about AIDS. This was also the era when people were aghast when Princess Diana shook hands with people who were HIV positive. It was also something that Graeme had to deal with which was severely affecting his day-to-day living and would also ultimately lead to his death. It is soul destroying to think that my poor darling brother, through no fault of his own, carried this heavy burden every single day.
15. I do recall some very happy times with Graeme and would like to recount them here. I moved in with my fiancée, Karen, shortly before our wedding in 1989 and our first daughter, Charlotte, was born in 1992. Graeme was her godfather. I have a lovely video of them both at her christening.
16. My father, Graeme and I were all avid Everton fans and we used to go and watch them play at Goodison Park during the 1980s and usually enjoyed a pre-game whisky. Such times hold very special memories.

17. Sadly, as my life then started to get even happier and more fulfilling, Graeme's life started to get more and more unhappy which was so painful to witness. He had been so happy living with Linda in Liverpool but sadly his health started to fail. He therefore had to give up his job and move back in with our mother and father.
18. In the [GRO-C] of 1993 Graeme found a lovely flat in [GRO-] which was on the Wirral and on the weekend of [GRO-C] 1993 my mother and father moved all of his furniture and belongings into the flat. However, Graeme was then rushed to the Royal Liverpool Hospital so our mother and father asked me to meet the electrician, who was due to carry out some work at the flat in [GRO-C] on the Monday which I did.
19. Sadly, Graeme passed away the next morning, [GRO-C] 1993. My mother and father were distraught and just wondered out of the hospital. I had to gather Graeme's possessions and I remember my uncle also being present. The funeral was then arranged very quickly and on the Thursday evening my mother had convinced herself that it was not Graeme in the coffin so I had to check that it was him in order to reassure her.
20. A service to celebrate the life of Graeme Jonathan Dodd took place at Christ Church, Higher Bebington on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> December 1993. Graeme's personally stated maxims were "*Quality not quantity*" "*Seek Beauty, Truth and Love, and always do your best*" "*Ever onwards and upwards*". I read the Eulogy and copies of this and the Order of Service are exhibited to my mother's statement.
21. Following what happened to Graeme and his passing, I became a totally different person. I am still affected by these events and not a day passes when I don't think of Graeme. My wife told me that I became a snappy and angry person who drank more. I probably still drink more today than I would otherwise have. Events happened such a long time ago; Graeme was infected with HIV 36 years ago and passed away 27 years ago but it still feels so raw. My wife is an only child and therefore my children do not have any cousins to

play with or to make memories with. They are missing out on having someone (Graeme) who would have been the most amazing and supportive uncle to them. On Christmas Day there is just our family; there are no uncles or cousins to visit. It is so very cruel and brought about by the Government wanting to cut costs, laziness and then downright lies.

22. I have a busy job and work away from home. My family are in the Wirral and I work near Heathrow. When I am in the office and the Contaminated Blood Scandal/Inquiry news flashes up on Sky News I have to take five minutes to myself as each time I see the banners or hear the terrible stories, I become overwhelmed.

23. Before the Inquiry kicked off, I used to dread having these types of conversations and I basically always avoided them. However, I want justice for Graeme and for all those both infected and affected. I want justice for all of those people we knew through the Haemophilia Society who were young children the same age as Graeme. Recently, I drove past some of the houses in which those children used to live; they don't live there now, not because they have moved on with their lives but because they are dead. Another thought comes to mind which is had Graeme survived HIV and been married with children, he would have received such poor financial and practical support that life would have been a massive uphill struggle for him.

24. I am not the person I was and I will never again be that person. My parents and I have had to be brave. After his death I became a changed person for a long time and suffered from what would have been diagnosed as depression but I struggled on without any help. Not only did I lose a brother, but my children lost an uncle. There is not a day which goes by when I don't think of him. I miss him so much and every time Everton are playing I think back to happy times together.

25. I have worked in IT all my life and when Charlotte was born we were a young family who loved to travel to the US. We used to go to Florida and we loved life in the US. People who used to work for me ended up upping sticks and

making a new life for their families in the US and they are a lot wealthier and happier than they used to be. They are now in the enviable position of being able to enjoy life without restriction. However, because our family lost Graeme I was never going to move away from my parents. Similarly, I was offered opportunities to work abroad but never pursued them as I didn't want to leave my parents on their own after they lost Graeme.

26. In a similar vein, although I am now aged 58, I make sure that I telephone my parents each evening before I go to bed to have a chat with them.

27. However, we have two children who we are immensely proud of. Charlotte is now aged 28 and Rebecca aged 24. Rebecca has also just purchased her first home with her boyfriend. The only thing that is missing from their lives is their Uncle Graeme. Rebecca never got to meet him and Charlotte did not meet him properly as she was only aged 18 months when he passed away.

28. Apart from speaking to Collins Solicitors the only people who I have ever spoken to about this are my mother, father, wife and my best mate who I have known since I was aged 11. This was due to the massive stigma surrounding HIV and AIDS. However, I have now started to be more open with people about what happened to Graeme and the publicity regarding the Inquiry has made this an easier process. People who I used to work with still send me messages of support in relation to what happened to Graeme which is lovely.

## **Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

29. I refer to my mother's statement.

30. Neither my family nor I have ever received any counselling or psychological support in consequence of Graeme's infection and subsequent death. Our discussions with Anna at Collins Solicitors were the first proactive conversations that any of my family have ever had.

## **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

31. I refer to my mother's statement.

32. I have never received any financial or practical or other help from the Macfarlane Trust.

### **Section 8. Other Issues**

33. The Inquiry has re-opened scarcely healed wounds and there are many days and nights when I am so angry and upset about how unfair and cruel this whole situation is. I can't put into words how much this situation affects me every day. I see how distraught my parents still are and I get so angry. I miss having a brother I can discuss life's challenges with and enjoy life's positive experiences with.

34. When I have been up to the Houses of Parliament to campaign I have met with and intermingled with those who have been both infected and affected by this tragedy. I have not been financially impacted, only emotionally impacted. However some of these people have lost everything and have no income. The way these people have been treated is absolutely appalling. As far as I am concerned, the individuals responsible for this tragedy need to be locked up and have the key thrown away. This is a scandal of the highest magnitude.

35. My children are very lucky as they have still got three grandparents; my wife's mother and my parents. My mother is now aged 87 and my father aged 90 and they have reached a damn good age but the really sad thing is that there is every chance that they will go to their graves without seeing justice for Graeme. There are people passing away every day who will also never see justice being done.

36. It is of course good that there is now an Inquiry but it is so wrong that it has taken so long and will undoubtedly take considerably more time before a conclusion is reached. Everyone knows that there are guilty parties and the lies, misleading and subsequent cover up which has followed that guilt has

gone on for far too long. My parents need an outcome in their lifetime; we need an interim review and early findings.

37. I want my parents to have that knowledge, even if they choose to just hold each other and cry. I am not interested in compensation; they could give that to charity because this is not about the money. This is about those people who were responsible for this horrific scandal being made accountable.

**Anonymity**

38. I do not want to apply for anonymity and I would like to give oral evidence to the Inquiry if it would assist with obtaining justice for my brother, Graeme.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed GRO-C .....

Dated... 1/5/2020 .....