

Witness Name: Shelagh Teahan

Statement No: WITN1559001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: March 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SHELAGH TEAHAN

I, Shelagh Teahan, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Shelagh Teahan. I was born on GRO-C 1952 and live at
GRO-C
2. I have 4 daughters GRO-C
GRO-C
3. I am divorced and currently live with my youngest daughter, who is working.
4. I make this statement on behalf of my late brother, Paul Teahan. Paul was born on GRO-C 1949 and died on 3 June 1990 at the age of 41 as a result of AIDS.
5. Paul was my only sibling, and I am his only living relative as our parents have died.
6. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late brother's full medical records. If and in so far as I have been provided with limited records the relevant entries are set out in the medical chronology at the end of this statement.

Section 2. How Affected

7. Paul was diagnosed with severe Haemophilia A when he was about 3 years old after being tested for it as he had a bleed in his knee.
8. He was given Factor VIII (FVIII) in order to treat his Haemophilia and I believe he received it probably in or about the early/mid 1980s.
9. Paul was mainly treated at the Haemophilia Centre at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) in Birmingham which is where he was also diagnosed with Haemophilia.
10. Paul self-administered FVIII since the mid 1980s. Prior to this he attended the hospital to be treated.
11. I believe Paul was infected with HIV at QEH. I also heard someone mentioning that he was infected with Hepatitis C (Hep C) but it was not written on his death certificate. I am not sure who I heard this from.
12. It is highly unlikely that Paul was ever given any information beforehand about the risk of being exposed to infections when using FVIII.
13. The first time I heard that Haemophiliacs were infected was when it came out in the news. Following this, Paul went to hospital and was tested for HIV in or about 1987. I am not sure whether the hospital invited Paul to be tested or whether he went and asked to be tested. However, following the test, he became very reclusive and what happened after that was very vague as he stopped speaking to me.
14. I do not think Paul was provided with any information about the infection.
15. I also believe that adequate information was not provided to Paul to understand and manage the infection.
16. I believe that information should have been provided to him earlier. I believe that it should have been provided when the hospitals found out that

Haemophiliacs had been infected. I do not think it was right for us to find out that Paul could have been infected via the newspaper and the media. That was the worst way to find out such terrible news.

17. I believe at the time Paul did not receive any information about the risks of others being infected as a result of the infection. However, as time went on I believe he found out through the media. The media portrayed it as though you could transmit the infection by just sharing a drink which was not true. He became rather reclusive and did not want to speak to anyone as a result. He feared passing on the HIV to others.

Section 3. Other Infections

18. I am not aware if Paul had any other infections other than HIV and possibly Hep C.

Section 4. Consent

19. I do not know whether Paul was treated or tested without his knowledge and consent.

20. I believe that Paul was not given adequate or full information about the infection and neither was my mother who was caring for him at the time.

21. I believe that Paul may potentially have been tested and treated for the purposes of research.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

22. Paul suffered mental effects as a result of being infected with HIV. He became reclusive and hid from his own family which was the worst part. Due to the stigma attached to the HIV at the time, he did not allow my mother to even tell me that he was HIV positive. He refused to see me or my children and I did not know why at the time, which was very hard for me. This made him very depressed as he had no one to speak to about the infection. The HIV also apparently got into his brain and he went mad. He was severely and mentally unwell and was admitted to a mental hospital in April 1990 where he was

sectioned and an in-patient for 2 weeks. I believe Paul's mental symptoms were partly attributed to the stigma that was attached to the HIV at the time.

23. Paul also suffered physical effects as a result of being infected with HIV. He became very weak and the HIV seemed to get hold of him very quickly. He deteriorated rapidly between 1989 and 1990. He refused to go out of the house and see any of his relatives. My 4 children never saw him again after he was diagnosed with HIV. My mother would not tell me what happened to him, and denied that Paul tested positive for HIV. The curiosity killed me and I eventually bullied my mother into telling me what happened to Paul and she told me he had tested positive for HIV and that he made her promise not to tell me. It was very shocking and upsetting for me. I later contacted QEH who had no idea Paul had been admitted to a mental hospital. He was then transferred back to QEH and died 2 weeks later.

24. I do not know whether Paul received any treatment for his HIV.

25. I do not know whether there were treatments for HIV which ought to have been available at the time, but I feel as though Paul was not monitored properly. I feel like he was given the diagnosis and then told to get on with it without being treated for it. It was not his fault that he was given contaminated FVIII blood products and infected with HIV. I believe the hospital could have done better job looking after him and caring for him.

26. Paul's status had a huge impact on his private, family and social life. As previously stated, he became reclusive and refused to tell anyone that he was HIV positive including me. He did not see anyone until he was admitted into the hospital. My mother stopped me from going to visit him at the house. I believe it was his request to my mother not to tell me as he was worried about passing it on to me and my children. He completely isolated himself from the world.

27. Paul's HIV status also had a huge impact on my private, family and social life. It caused a family rift as I was told that he did not want to visit me anymore which was quite upsetting for me. I also could not tell people that Paul died of

AIDS, due to the horrible things that people said back then due to the stigma attached to it. [GRO-C]

[GRO-C] At the beginning, this was traumatic for me remembering what happened to Paul even though I know that the treatment that Haemophiliacs receive now is safe. It made me think twice and it was disturbing thinking about it.

28. There was a stigma attached to HIV at the time. The media portrayed HIV as if people got it through their own fault and that it was caused by their particular lifestyle. Back then, TV advertisements portrayed HIV as a God's curse towards gay people which was very difficult for us, especially my mother.

29. Paul being infected and his death had an impact on my children. It was very difficult for them losing their only uncle. In 1988 I lost a child due to Haemophilia. So it affected my children, especially my two eldest children who were young teenagers at the time. I did not know what to tell them [GRO-C]

[GRO-C]

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

30. I do not know whether Paul was offered any counselling or psychological support. However, if it was offered at the hospital, he would have attended the sessions.

31. I do not believe my mother received any counselling or psychological support. If it was offered, it would have absolutely helped my mother, especially as she did not seem to realise that he was going to die.

32. I was not offered any counselling or psychological support as a result of Paul being infected. If it was offered to me, it would have helped me to just talk about what happened to Paul and make sense of it.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

33. Paul received a payment of around £40,000 just before he died. I do not know which Trust or Fund he received it from. He donated most of the money to the Haemophilia Society through his Will.

34. I received a Stage 1 lump sum payment of £20,000 from the Skipton Fund approximately 8 to 10 years ago. I believe I was one of the last to receive the payment. The secretary at the Haemophilia Society told me about the Skipton Fund and told me that it was closing which was when I made the application. I believe the application was straight forward.

Section 8. Other Issues

35. I could not get hold of Paul's medical records as I was told that they have been destroyed.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

36. I confirm that I do not wish to apply for anonymity and that I understand this statement will be published and disclosed as part of the Inquiry.

37. 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

Dated 11/03/2019