

Witness Name: Janet Smith

Statement No.: WITN2669001

Exhibits: None

Dated: 7/12/18

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MRS JANET SMITH

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 6th November 2018.

I, Janet Smith, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Janet Smith and my date of birth is GRO-C 1945. My address is known to the Inquiry. I am one of the late William Campbell's sisters. He has two sisters and her name is June Campbell. I intend to speak about my brother's experience of being infected with hepatitis C upon receiving infected blood transfusion following a hernia operation at Hairmyres Hospital. In particular, the nature of his illness, how the illness affected him, the treatment received and the impact it had on him and our family life.

2. My brother died when he was 44 years old. He died on 4th February 1999. We have another sister, June Campbell, who has already been contacted by Thompsons as well regarding the Infected Blood Inquiry.

Section 2. How Affected

3. My brother, my sister and I were all very close. In particular, our sister June will be able to provide a lot more information because she was staying at our mother's house when our brother was ill. My mother's address was GRO-C
GRO-C He was staying with our mother. She was able to provide a lot more care and assistance. I had already moved out of my mother's house and was no longer living with my mum at the time. My brother was very much a mummy's boy. I do remember he got a flat a few doors down from our mothers for about nine months. I think his address was GRO-C It was literally only a few doors from my mums but even though he had his own flat he was always at our mother's. He would go first thing in the morning then come back at lunchtime. He would then come back in the evening. I cannot remember how long ago that was but my sister June would know as she lived with my mother at the time. I know he gave his flat up when he moved back in with our mum.
4. My brother received a single blood transfusion after a hernia operation. The blood transfusion took place at Hairmyres Hospital, East Kilbride. I have no idea when that was.
5. My brother was told that it was simply blood to replace the blood that he had lost during the operation. That was the only time my brother ever received a blood transfusion.
6. The hernia operation took place at Hairmyres Hospital in East Kilbride. That is where my brother was given the transfusion following the operation. I cannot remember when that was.

7. I do not know the exact date when the hernia operation took place, but it was during the early nineties. As I said, my brother died in 1999 and I think that the operation must have taken place about seven years before his death.
8. In the early nineties, my brother had an emergency hernia operation at Hairmyres Hospital and his health really deteriorated after that. The hernia required him to have an emergency operation because it went down to his navel. One night it suddenly erupted, meaning that he had to be taken to hospital and received the operation at 1.00 a.m. My brother had a really poor quality of life after the operation. He had problems with his liver and his kidneys. Right before he died, he was taken to the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow and told that he had hepatitis C. When he was told that he had hepatitis C, he gave me a book to read about this condition. It was his own book that he had already read himself. He gave it to me so I could read it and understand his condition. I do remember taking it home and reading it over two nights. I was very shocked and upset that William had Hepatitis C. I can remember being surprised to discover that this condition can lie dormant in a person's system for years. I cannot remember what happened to the book, the title or who wrote it. I believe it was written by the people who had this condition and their own experiences. When he was taken to the Royal Infirmary, he was going to receive a liver transplant but he got a bowel infection. For this reason, he had to be put in isolation. He had a horrible death. The doctor told me that his heart was strong, but everything else in his body was shutting down. When he died, his coffin had to be sealed, which might have been related to the fact that he had hepatitis C.
9. No risks were disclosed before the operation or the transfusion about the risk of being exposed to infection due to the blood transfusion at the time of his hernia operation. There were no scares back then. If that was the operation that you needed, then that is the operation that you got, and there was nothing else to be discussed.
10. As far as I am aware, my brother only ever had hepatitis C due to the blood transfusion that he received. If he had any other infection, he never told us. Right before his death, he did develop a bowel infection at hospital but I do not know much about this.

11. I do not know how or when precisely my brother found out that he was infected with hepatitis C. I found out when I visited him at the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow. That is when he gave me the book about hepatitis C and told me to read it.
12. I do not know what information my brother was given about the infection or who provided that information. I know that I was worried about the news that he was infected with hepatitis C and I asked the doctor if I could have been infected with it. I had already read the book twice at that point and the doctor told me that it was unlikely that I could have been infected. The book said that that hepatitis C could be transmitted through bodily fluids, mainly through sexual intercourse, drug use and contact with infected blood. However, my brother was not gay and he did not take drugs.
13. I do not know if adequate information was given to my brother for him to understand and manage the infection. I do not even know whether he was given or whether he bought the book about hepatitis C. He had a lot of medication after he left the hospital following his operation and he had so many tablets that he refused to take some of them because they were incompatible with some of the other tablets. He was taking about eighteen tablets a day and the doctors were not making sure that taking them all at the same time would be okay.
14. I do not know if information could have been provided earlier to my brother.
15. I do not know when my brother was told that he had hepatitis C or how he was told about this. My brother was always reading. His book about hepatitis C said that sometimes the symptoms don't appear for years. There is no cure for hepatitis C. I do not think that anything could have been done about it anyway.
16. My brother was probably given information about the risks of others being infected as a result of the hepatitis C and about how to prevent others from becoming infected. This is an assumption on my part as I do not know for certain. However, I cannot be sure about this. Someone can get infected through the use of drugs, sexual intercourse

or a blood transfusion and I know this from reading. Not only did my brother not take drugs, but he was also celibate for years. Ages seventeen to twenty-three, my brother had a girlfriend. However, she then left him because she met someone else and he never had sex with anyone else.

Section 3. Other Infections

17. I do not believe that my brother received any infection or infections other than hepatitis C as a result of being given infected blood products. If he did, then he never told us.

Section 4. Consent

18. I do not know whether or not my brother was treated or tested without his knowledge or without his consent or without being given adequate or full information for the purposes of research. The issue is that ordinary people are never told what the doctors are doing at the hospital. You just have to trust them and go along with it if you want to be alright and you want to live.

Section 5. Impact

19. I believe that being infected with hepatitis C had an impact on my brother's health.
20. Following his hernia operation, my brother started bloating up and was put on a drain to check his fluid intake. His weight decreased from 22 stone to 13 stone in just over one week. One minute he was completely bloated and the next he was extremely skinny. This happened two or three times before his death. He kept getting to buy new clothes to accommodate his extreme and quick weight fluctuations. His fluid intake was limited, as it was not food that was causing the bloating, but it was related to his fluid intake. He seemed okay mentally. June, our other sister, spent more time with him than I did. She used to go to the hospital to massage his legs with cream. This helped because his legs were so bloated that he could not wear socks, as the socks would bite into his legs causing him pain.

21. I am unsure as to what further medical complications or conditions resulted from the hepatitis C. I don't really know if there were any other symptoms.
22. What happened as a result of the hepatitis C is that my brother was told that he needed another liver, even though he was not a heavy drinker. He was single and only drank one pint at the pub and then went back home straight after. He was not a heavy drinker at all. However, they told him that his liver had deteriorated and he would need another liver. He completely stopped drinking for about a year before his death in order to better prepare for the liver operation. He was told this while he was in the Royal Infirmary Hospital in Glasgow. I cannot remember when this was or who told him. I can only assume it was a consultant. He never received the new liver, though. The reason why he never received the new liver is that he was at the Royal Infirmary in Glasgow for nearly two weeks before he died, and could not get the new liver because of the infection in his bowel that I described earlier. He was isolated in a different ward because his bowel infection was highly infectious and contagious. When they moved him to the isolated ward, he was conscious at first and then he would keep taking fits. The fits happened every five minutes. It was horrible to watch. The doctors could not give him any more medication. He was very distressed, and so were June and I. I told him that he could go, because I knew that he was dying. The doctor told us that his brain was shutting down and only his heart was strong. All his other organs were giving up. Speaking about this still makes me cry because it was absolutely horrible. I was a carer for years and have seen lots of people dying, but my brother's death was the worst I have ever seen.
23. We never had enough knowledge to say if any treatment should have been made available that wasn't. My sister and I kept asking for something even to put him out of his misery on his last days because it was so bad. I took his hand and told him to just go. We knew that he was not going to make it. He had been so happy only a couple of

weeks earlier, when he thought he was getting a new liver! He used to write wee poems for the nurses and for a lot of other people, about eight to ten lines each. He even wrote his own epitaph. I think he knew that he was dying because he left the epitaph with one of his friends to be ready for when he died.

24. My brother never had any issues with his dental treatment. He had all his teeth taken out in his thirties. However, I once went to donate blood and was told that I could not do so. I don't know the reasons why, but I have an uncommon blood type and that might be why. There is often a trailer type caravan that parks on the Coca Cola factory car park at East Kilbride. It belongs to the NHS and it is for people who want to volunteer to give blood.
25. My brother was the youngest sibling and he was very close with our mother. It broke her heart when he died. It affected her so badly that she couldn't even walk down the stairs to go to his funeral. I cannot remember how long in advance of his death my brother was told that he had hepatitis C.
26. He did miss out on spending more time with his friends. He would go to the pub and could only have a lemonade as he was not drinking anymore in order to prepare for his liver transplant. He was not into sports, but he did play bowls. He had been feeling ill for a while by the time he died.
27. My brother did not tell anyone that he had hepatitis C, only his family. We knew that something was up when he died because his coffin could not come back to my mother's house as all the other coffins whenever there had been a death in the family. His coffin had to go straight to the undertaker and it was sealed. My mother was heartbroken because my brother's body could not come back to the house.
28. My brother had been made redundant about four years before his death. I think he must have been made redundant in 1990. He was a crane driver. His work closed down and then reopened. This meant that some people got kept on, and some people did not. He

was not made redundant because of his poor health, but he did not manage to find new employment afterwards.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

29. No treatment, care, support or counselling was offered to my brother, at least not that I am aware of happening.
30. Treatment, care, support or counselling were not offered to myself or to my mother following my brother's death.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

31. I do not think that my brother ever received any financial assistance due to becoming infected with hepatitis C and he was not a member of any groups.
32. I have never received any financial assistance myself.

Section 8. Other Issues

33. I think that people should be made more aware about things that happen in society like this infection. It is terrible that my brother had to give me a book about hepatitis C for me to learn about it. The book had been written by ordinary people and was very informative. I read it twice during the course of two nights. It was only a few years after my brother died when the papers started publishing articles about hepatitis C. When my brother was still alive, I told him that we should contact someone about what we were seeing in the papers and he said to just leave it. However, after his death, my sister and I saw something about infected blood on TV and that is when we decided to phone up. Hepatitis C can lie dormant for years in your system. Lots of people are walking about who are infected and don't know it. They will probably never know.

34. I think all documents contained within my late brother's medical records will be important. I think that I must have got rid of the letters regarding my brother's illness while decluttering my house as I never thought that we would need them. I do not know whether my brother's medical records are complete or whether any part of them is missing. We never asked for the medical records. My sister June knows the doctor who treated our late brother, as my sister was staying at our mother's too when our brother was ill.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 7/12/18