

Witness Name: Alan James Campbell

Statement No: WITN2672001

Exhibits: NONE

Dated: 25th January, 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

First WRITTEN STATEMENT OF Alan James Campbell

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 5th November, 2018.

I, Alan James Campbell will say as follows:

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Alan James Campbell. My date of birth is GRO-C 1966 and my address is known to the enquiry. I am a self-employed brick layer. I intend to speak about my infection of Hepatitis C. In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me and my family.

Section 2. How infected

2. In 1984 or 1985, when I was around 20 years of age, I had an accident. I slipped and fell through a glass plate. I sliced through an artery in my leg and was losing a lot of blood. I was rushed via ambulance to the royal infirmary in Glasgow where I had an emergency operation on my leg. I received a blood transfusion as I had lost 4 pints of blood.
3. My operation was an emergency, so I was not told prior to my operation about the risks of being infected with contaminated blood, should I require a transfusion. When I came round from the operation, I was informed that because of my extreme blood loss, I had had to have a blood transfusion. I was not told that there was any risk to a blood transfusion. At the time I was grateful as the transfusion had saved my life. I do not know the name of the doctors or consultants who treated me at the royal infirmary. I was discharged from the royal infirmary after 3 or 4 days.
4. After recovery from the surgery, I continued to lead a normal life. I went back to work as a self-employed brick layer.
5. Sometime between 1999 and 2001, when I was in my mid-30s, I began to feel very unwell. I felt jaded and very lethargic. I was totally drained and extremely fatigued. I went to see my doctor and he examined me and took a blood test. A week later my doctor phoned me and asked me to go into the surgery to see him. When I saw him he said "I have some bad news for you, your blood tests have come back and you have tested positive for hepatitis C", he said it was a blood-borne disease. He did ask me if I had taken drugs and shared a needle with someone. I had a good relationship with my doctor, he was well aware that I didn't take drugs. He started to look through my file and noted that I had had a blood transfusion in 1994 or 1995. He told me that I must have contracted the infection as a result of being given contaminated blood during my transfusion. I remember he said that

people in the 80s were getting hepatitis C and HIV by being given infected blood or blood products. He said some people had got hepatitis C and HIV. He did tell me that the infection could be passed to others through blood to blood contact and through sexual intercourse. He advised me to get my wife Karen tested for hepatitis C. I had never heard of hepatitis C before and didn't realise it was a serious condition. He said he would refer me to a liver specialist.

6. I wasn't really given adequate information to help me understand and manage my infection.

7.

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Section 3. Other infections

8. I do not believe I received any other infection or infections other than hepatitis C.

Section 4. Consent

9. I do not believe I was treated or tested without my knowledge or consent. I do not believe I was treated or tested for the purpose of research.

Section 5. Impact

10. The mental and physical effects of having been infected with hepatitis C were profound. Physically, I was extremely tired. I felt generally ill and run down. I was a self-employed brick layer but I had no energy to do my work. Mentally, I became depressed as I worried about my health.

11. There were no other medical complications or conditions that resulted from the infection.
12. I was referred to Brownlee Centre, Gartnavel Hospital, Glasgow and I was under the care of Professor Fox. I remember I was sat in the waiting room amongst people who had yellow skin and looked jaundice. Professor Fox said to me "You're not my usual patient", he acknowledged I had received the infection through my blood transfusion, he explained the infection can lay dormant for many years. He offered me a treatment. He told me that it was a 6 month course but that it could have side effects. He did explain that the side effects could be tiredness, dizziness and nausea. Nothing he could have said to be could have prepared me for what was to come.
13. I did not face any difficulties or obstacles in accessing the treatment, it was offered to me. I do not know if there were any other treatments available to me at that time. I was not informed if there were any.
14. The treatment I received was aggressive and brutal. I was given tablets called something like rafanel. I took one of these tablets once per day. Once a week I would also self-inject with a substance, I do not know the name of this substance
15. As soon as I started taking this treatment, the side effects were horrendous. Physically, I was so tired I couldn't do anything. I was physically and mentally exhausted. It was the worst time of my life. I could only go into work on the odd day as I was so fatigued. For a self-employed man this was horrendous and caused me a lot of anxiety and stress.
16. My infected status has impacted on me in relation to medical conditions. I wanted a hair transplant and I paid for flights and a hotel to Istanbul. I had booked the transplant there as it was cheaper than in

the United Kingdom. When I got to the hospital for the procedure, they took my bloods. Eventually, one of the doctors came up to me and told me that I had tested positive for hepatitis C and they refused to do the operation. I was devastated and embarrassed. I felt dirty, like a leper.

17. The impact of being infected with hepatitis C destroyed my marriage. I had been married for 12 years with 3 children. My eldest child is called Scott, he would have been around 13 at the time. My middle child is called Louise, she would have been around 11 years old. My third child is called Claire, who was 4 years old at the time. Whilst I was on the treatment, I cut myself off from my family. I was moody, depressed and very snappy. My glass was always half full. I must have been a nightmare to live with. The infection had a devastating effect on my sex life. My wife was aware that she could get the infection through sexual intercourse. She thought that the only way to avoid getting the infection was to not have sexual intercourse at all. The marriage was doomed from then on in. [GRO-C] [GRO-C] It was a terrible time in my household. So many arguments, shouting at each other. [GRO-C] [GRO-C] We subsequently divorced in 2015.

18. After I finished the treatment, I became severely depressed. My mood was so low that at times I felt suicidal. I went to my doctor. I had been told that the treatment I had received had been successful and the hepatitis C was dormant. I was made aware that the hepatitis could come active again in the future. Everything had got on top of me, the effects of the brutal treatment, my constant fatigue, inability to do anything and the worry of my future health took its toll. I ended up back at my doctors, Dr Barrett, he informed me that there was some kind of link between the treatment I had received and my depression. He prescribed me anti-depressants, they were escitalopram tablets. I have been on these anti-depressant ever since. I did try to come off them a

few years ago but my low mood came back. I am resigned to being on them for life.

19. I am aware of the stigma of having hepatitis C. It is associated with drug users and sharing needles. I have never taken illegal drugs and I did not want to associate myself with that activity. I did not tell anyone of my condition, I did not want to be falsely judged. My wife and I kept it to ourselves, not even telling close family and friends.

20. The symptoms from my hepatitis C infection did have a significant impact on my work. I am self-employed but was unable to work. I had to keep a roof over my children's heads and as such I had to force myself to work. This wasn't always possible as I felt so ill. Prior to becoming ill, I was earning £2,000 a month. During my illness, I was lucky to bring in £150 a week. I was living on credit cards and bank loans. The quality of life for my family took a severe nose dive.

21. I was never offered any counselling or psychological support. I do feel that I would have benefited from counselling. I really needed to talk to someone regarding what had happened to me. I had to deal with it on my own and as a result I became clinically depressed.

Section 7. Financial assistance

22. I have received financial assistance from the Skipton fund and the Scottish government.

23. It was Professor Fox and Gartnavel hospital that informed me there was financial compensation available for people who had received contaminated blood and blood products. Professor Fox filled the forms in for me and I signed them. He sent them off.

24. A few months later I received a bank transfer of £15,000 from the Skipton fund. Two years ago I received a letter from the Scottish

government, I remember there were forms to fill in regarding how the hepatitis C had affected my life. There were three categories, high, moderate and low. I sent the forms off and they replied putting me in the moderate category. I received a bank transfer of £30,000. I was also awarded a monthly sum of £525. This payment started in December 2018. I have had my first payment this month. I will receive this monthly sum for three years and then I will be reassessed.

25. I did not face any difficulties or obstacles in applying or obtaining financial assistance.

26. I am grateful for the money I was awarded. It has helped pay off some of my debts, no amount of money however could compensate for my health and the physical and mental torture I endured and still do.

Section 8 other issues

I do not want to remain anonymous in this enquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

13.2.19