

Witness Name: Margaret Angela Jane Russon

Statement No: WITN2799001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: July 2019

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARGARET ANGELA JANE RUSSON

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I, Margaret Angela Jane Russon, will say as follows:-

#### Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Margaret Angela Jane Russon. I was born on GRO-C 1965 and I live at GRO-C I am married and live at the above address with my husband and daughter.
2. I make this statement on behalf of my late father, Jack Hewson. He was born on GRO-C 1941 and died on GRO-C 2018 as a result of Hepatitis C (Hep C).
3. My mother, Pamela Ann Hewson, has also produced a witness statement for the Inquiry ('WITN2914001').
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late father'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 Infected

5. I would like to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

### **Section 3. Other Infections**

6. I would like to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

### **Section 4. Consent**

7. I would like to rely on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

### **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

8. I would like to rely on part of my mother's statement in relation to this section.
9. My father's infection as well as his subsequent death impacted on me physically, mentally and emotionally. I was very close to my father and I was always the one that he came to for advice or if he was distressed. I was able to talk to him and try to reason with him when he was having a paranoid episode. My father's years of illness naturally took its toll on the relationship between him and my mother. It was both physically and mentally exhausting caring for him and I was the one who would help sort things out.
10. I would take care of my father whilst my mother had a few days break or take my mother away whilst my brother took care of my father. I had to take care of all the arrangements when my father passed away. He used to confide in me. Although he had been ill for so long, it was still a shock when he died, and nothing prepares you for it. Not only did we have his death to deal with but then because of the Hep C, having the post-mortem and the Inquest added greatly to our distress. I was off work for a few months and had counselling to help and deal with everything that had happened and to help my mother through everything.
11. It was by accident, whilst searching for more details on Hep C, that I came across the EIBSS and the Public Inquiry information. It was prevalent in the news at the time, so I started the long process of applying for financial assistance with my mother. I had to do a lot of work to get information and documents, writing to different people for information and spent many late nights and hours of time trying to piece everything together; this left little time

for my own family and affected me ultimately. I suffered with severe migraines and anxiety, hence the need for the counselling.

12. I was unable to work for a few months following my father's death not only due to grief but with trying to deal with Inquest and providing and seeking out information and applying to the EIBSS.

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

13. I would like to rely in part on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

14. I sought counselling myself with the occupational health service within my employment to help me come to terms with the grief and everything involved surrounding my father's death. I was not offered it as a result of what happened to my father.

#### **Section 7. Financial Assistance**

15. I would like to rely in part on my mother's statement in relation to this section.

16. My father was not offered any financial support at the time. This is because his condition went undiagnosed for so long.

17. I had to take on the responsibility of making all the arrangements and providing the required information to the Coroner and the process of applying to the EIBSS, as stated above.

18. My father died before we knew anything about any of the payments, but we were able to apply on behalf of my late father's estate. We were not made aware that we were entitled to any payments or that any schemes existed by the doctors or hospital when he died. It was only when it was confirmed that he had contracted Hep C from a blood transfusion in 1982 before blood was being screened that I started looking into it more on the internet and came across the EIBSS. I helped my mother to apply and the estate received Skipton Payments of Stage 1 in the sum of £20,000 in October 2018 and Stage 2 in the sum of £50,000 in November 2018.

19. I had to deal with all the paperwork and get all the information relating to my father's blood transfusion as my mother was finding it difficult to deal with it all after my father's death. We had to apply for probate as my father did not leave a Will because he had nothing to leave. We had to fill in a tax form to be able to apply for probate. We tried to retrieve my father's medical records from the time of his blood transfusion but were unable to get them. We had to write to the Consultant who had been treating him to ask if he could fill in all the information on the forms for the financial assistance. If it had not been for me my mother would not have received anything as she would not have been able to go online and be able to understand what was required. I did have difficulty initially trying to work out if we were eligible and what we had to do. The website was not the easiest to understand. Whilst £70,000 may seem like a lot of money I think this a small price to pay for someone's life. If he had died due to any other medical negligence, I believe that the payment would have been much greater.

20. I have not received any payments at all from any Trusts and Funds that were set up.

**Anonymity, disclosure and redaction**

21. I do not wish to remain anonymous.

22. I want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signature GRO-C .....

Dated 26/07/2019