

Witness Name: Bartholomew Blomfield

Statement No: WITN2881001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: March 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF BARTHOLOMEW BLOMFIELD

I, Bartholomew Blomfield will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Bartholomew Blomfield. I was born on 1986 and I live at
2. I am currently self-employed, as a Consultant and I referee for the FA.
3. I make this witness statement on behalf of my late uncle, Duncan Leigh Benfield. He was born on 1967 and died on 2002 at the age of 35 as a result of Hepatitis C (Hep C) and AIDS.
4. My mother, Charis Blomfield has also produced a witness statement 'WITN2882001' for the Inquiry.
5. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my late uncle'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

6. I wish to rely on my mother's witness statement in relation to this section.

Section 3. Other Infections

7. I wish to rely on my mother's witness statement in relation to this section.

Section 4. Consent

8. I wish to rely on my mother's witness statement in relation to this section.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

9. My uncle suffered mentally and physically as a result of the HIV. He became quite self-destructive and sometimes gave up hope. Looking back as an adult now and what he was going through, I understand how hard it must have been for him living with the infections. I believe as a result of the infections, he was involved in an accident which resulted in his vehicle crashing off a hill, which left him in a vegetative state for 7/8 months.

10. My uncle's death had a huge mental impact on me. I saw how he died when I was just a child which was very tough for me. I find it quite difficult talking about him as it makes me very emotional. I was about 15 years old when he crashed his car off a mini cliff and he was in a vegetative state. Prior to this incident, I was a very happy person but after the accident I was devastated. It was upsetting for me to see my uncle brain dead as I was very close to him. He was like a father to me. He was the only male influence in my life when I was growing up. I looked up to him as a teenager and he gave me good advice and helped me. I am still upset as to what happened to him and I wish he was still alive.

11. After my uncle's death, I started to get bullied at my boarding school and I did not know what to do. I believe that had my uncle been alive, he would have

helped me through the terrible time and I believe that I would not have suffered. This had an educational effect on me. It impacted on my well-being at the time which has left an emotional scar on me.

12. I believe I may have lost some time off school during my uncle's last few days. I do not know if he had changed after his diagnosis of HIV as I saw him intermittently. I was in boarding school and I was also very young when he was diagnosed. I believe I could have performed better at school had my uncle not been infected.

13. Growing up in my early 20s I was quite damaged. It has been very difficult not having my uncle around. I was very close to him.

14. My sister, my mother and my grandmother were all affected by my uncle's diagnosis and his subsequent death. It ripped our whole family apart and it still has not healed. He had a difficult childhood and he had such a hard life growing up with HIV, yet he was still smiling when he saw me and my sister. He used to take me out to spend time with me. I looked up to him so much and I loved him dearly.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

15. I wish to rely on my mother's witness statement in relation to part of this section.

16. I was never offered counselling or psychological support. I think if it was offered to me, it could have helped me as a teenager, especially because I was unhappy in school.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

17. I wish to rely on my mother's witness statement in relation to part of this section.

18. I do not believe I received any financial assistance as a result of my uncle's death.

Section 8. Other Issues

19. I hope the Inquiry gets to the bottom of this scandal.

20. I think it is disgraceful what has happened to Haemophiliacs and how the government has treated them. I am ashamed of the government and hospitals who treated patients as guinea pigs. It is a black mark on British history and I would like answers.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

21. 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.

22. I do not mind giving oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.. GRO-C

Dated 17.04.19