Witness Name: Norman Revill
Statement No.: WITN2036001
Exhibits: WITN2036002
Dated:

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NORMAN REVILL

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Norman Revill. My date of birth and address are known to the Inquiry.

2. I live in a village just outside GRO-C called GRO-C I have been married to my second wife for 19 years. My first marriage ended because of the impact of being infected with HCV though NHS contaminated blood on my family and me. I have 5 children; 2 with my first wife and 3 with my second wife. I am employed by the YM Group in sales.

3. I previously lived in Nottinghamshire where my blood contamination was discovered and treated. My current health position is I am HEP C negative and have been reasonably well since 1999.

Section 2. How infected

4. I believe I contracted HCV when I was given a blood transfusion on 11, 12 and 13 April 1983. **[WITN2036002]**

5. On 11th April 1983 I worked in a factory as a printer, on arriving at work I felt unwell but continued to work until the end of my shift. During the shift I almost passed out twice when trying to lift items that were not particularly heavy.

6. When I arrived home in GRO-C at around 2:30pm I really felt very unwell and arranged an appointment to see my local GP. When I arrived at the surgery I was told to lie down in a side room because there was I was so anemic and, at this time, I was feeling nauseous. A few minutes later I got up and ran to the toilet; I vomited several pints of blood all over the floor and walls as well as the toilet. I stumbled back to the side room and got back onto the bed only to be insulted by a cleaner for producing such a mess.

7. My usual GP wasn't available and a newly qualified GP came in to see me. The GP examined the vomit and confirmed that it was blood. She said she could see that I was anemic and told me to go home and come back in the morning. At this point I could hardly walk; I was really weak and emotionally distressed.

8. When I got home, I lay down on the sofa and waited for my wife to arrive. The doorbell rang and as I got up to answer the door felt dizzy, I opened the door and immediately passed out hitting my head on a sharp object as I hit the floor. The lady who was at the door telephoned for an ambulance and I was taken to the Accident and Emergency department at the Queens Medical Centre hospital in GRO-C. I had sustained a 3 inch laceration to my crown.

9. At A&E I was examined and given 12 stitches to the top of my head. My blood count was checked and found that I had a very low count.

10. At this point I was transferred to Nottingham City Hospital where had it was identified that I had a duodenal ulcer that had eaten into an artery in my stomach which then bled until my stomach was full of blood, which is what caused me to vomit blood at the GP surgery and why I was so anemic. I had lost between 4 to 5 pints of blood. Within a few hours I was given a blood transfusion of 4 units of blood, which I now know was contaminated NHS blood. One or more of the units was contaminated with HCV.

11. At no time during my time at the hospital where I had the transfusion, was I advised that there was a risk of contamination/ infection through having a transfusion.

12. On or around the June 1992, I was attending a meeting in Barnsley and saw a mobile blood transfusion unit and decided that I would give blood as a gesture to those who gave blood for my transfusion, I gave one pint. This was the first time that I had given blood.

13. On or around the 14th July 1992 at around 08:00am I received a phone call from a doctor based in the Sheffield blood transfusion centre who asked me my name and date of birth and whether I had given blood earlier that month. I answered his questions and then I was told to drive immediately to the SBTC. I arrived around 10:30am parked my car and was greeted by two nurses, a doctor and a wheelchair. They insisted that I get in the chair and I was wheeled into the centre. At this time no one had informed me of anything and I was getting very anxious and frightened. Staff took me into an office where I was met by two doctors one of which was D V. James and a few other people who didn't identify themselves.

14. I still didn't know what was happening at this point but I began to realise that this was a serious situation regarding the blood I had given. The doctors then started to examine me looking on my arms for drug use, tattoos and then feeling my liver, which was all incredibly worrying. After the examination came the interrogation, am I gay? Have I got any tattoos, do I take intravenous drugs? Have I had a sexually transmitted disease? Have I ever had a blood transfusion? Have I had casual sex during my marriage with a man or a woman?

15. I was then asked to wait in the waiting room and after about 15 minutes I was recalled to the office with the doctors. At that point the doctor explained that I have a blood virus called HEP C that lives in the Liver and can cause inflammation of the liver. I was told that I would be referred to Nottingham City Hospital, the hospital that had infected me originally. My consultant there was Prof. Roger Finch.

16. The information I received about HEP C at this point was very limited, no detail about what could happen, how it will affect my life, what I could do to help the situation; nothing. At this point I should have been told the seriousness of this disease and that it was life threatening, but I was told nothing at all just told to wait for my appointment to arrive for NCH. I was not given any information. I do not remember the doctor saying that it was transmittable; no one told me to take precautions and I was never given any literature or leaflets.

17. I was very upset at this point. I walked back to the car, I was very confused and extremely anxious I had just had this bomb shell dropped on me and I had no idea what it all meant.

18. In July 1992, I attended an examination at NCH with Prof Finch. He asked more questions about my medical history, my life style and my sexual experiences. He then arranged for more blood tests to be carried out. The results highlighted that the liver was inflamed and my ATL's were high. I was told that I would need to have a liver biopsy. I had the biopsy on 16th September 1992 at the City Hospital. I do not think I was given any further information about the disease at this stage.

19. The liver biopsy was horrific, it felt like I had been stabbed and then told not to move for 24 hours. After the operation I was left on a trolley in a corridor for about 2 hours before being transferred to a ward.

Section 3. Other Infections

20. Around January 1992 and before I had been informed about my HCV, I was in Germany with customers at dinner. It was about 8:00pm and I began to feel really ill, I excused myself from the dinner and went to my room and went to bed with fever type symptoms. Within an hour I started to sweat like I have never experienced before, so bad was the sweating that I changed the bedding, put towels on to the bed and opened the windows. The outside temperature was - 17 degrees and within minutes the bed linen was wet though as if it had just been pulled out of a bath. At this stage I was shivering and sweating profusely. I flew back to LHR the next day but was too weak to drive back to GRO-C so I checked into a hotel around 11:00am and slept right through to the following day at 2:00pm when I was woken by the maid.

21. I think this was part of the HCV but I can't be sure. I didn't go to the GP in GRO-C for this incident.

Section 4. Consent

22. At no time when I was at the hospital where I had the transfusion, was I advised that there was a risk of infection in having a transfusion. I underwent the blood transfusion in 1983, and therefore, I believe that it was known that NHS blood/blood products might be contaminated. No one sat down with me to explain what was happening or why I needed a blood transfusion. If I had known there was a risk that the NHS blood might be contaminated I would have asked if I could wait before I underwent the transfusion. I do not believe that I was in a life threatening condition.

23. It is really difficult to identify if I was tested without my knowledge. When they identified the HCV I was told that this virus wasn't tested for until 1991 and then it became a mandatory test for all blood donations.

24. It is possible that when I was at the SBTC and before I was told about the virus, that they would have tested to confirm the original results, but I can't be sure about this as I have no firm evidence.

Section 5. Impact

25. The impact of being contaminated with HCV has been incredibly distressing and extremely painful for me and my family. When I first found out that I had the virus my brother was diagnosed with cancer; the worry and pain that this inflicted on my mum, my siblings, our wives and children was incredibly torturous. In November 1992 my brother died and the expectations were that I would be following.

26. During my treatment I endured 3 liver biopsies which are just awful. I can only describe a liver biopsy as being stabbed in the ribs and then not being allowed to move for 24hours for the fear of internal bleeding and surgery to fix the bleeding. Luckily that did not happen but the worry and anguish associated with such a procedure was mentally and physically exhausting.

27. When I was referred to the NCH, the time lost for attending over the 6 year period was enormous. My employer at the time was very good and allowed me time off, but my work did suffer as a consequence. During some treatments I was too sick and was off work for many weeks. I had to take time off when I was taking Interferon, when I had my liver biopsies and for every time I visited the hospital or my doctor. I have never calculated the number of days/weeks that I had to take off, some of this time was holiday and some unpaid leave.

28. For 18 months I was given Interferon Beta (IB), this is a really debilitating as a treatment and constant administration of the drug continues the effect every day of the 18 months. The problem with taking IB is initially you have to take one week of work to attend training and administration course for the drug. When you start the program you have to inject the correct amount of IB into soft tissue, I could only inject into my stomach. The effect was horrendous; shortly after the injection you would feel very lethargic with flu like symptoms. The next day you are almost unable to work with the side effects and then day three you had to start the cycle all over again. This went on for 18 months. In between the treatment, I had constant visits to the hospital for blood tests along with days of being depressed and anxious about what was happening to my life. I was emotionally upset; the slightest thing would cause me to have floods of tears.

29. Above all I have suffered with a change of personality; pre-diagnosis I used to be a joker, a happy guy with a great attitude to life, but all of that changed after I received my diagnosis. The mental impact of knowing I have a disease that could kill me is constantly eating away at me; it wears me down mentally into a shadow of what I was. The mental effects changed my character and had a significant effect on the relationship with my first wife and 2 children. As a consequence of me becoming infected and the stress and impact of HCV on me both physically and mentally the relationship broke down and in 1996 I was divorced. This was a direct result of my mental state and knowing I had been contaminated with HCV.

30. I also used to be quite an athlete, half marathon runner and football player. This all stopped in 1992 and I have never been able to regain the enthusiasm or the physical and mental strength to get that back into my life, now I'm too old.

31. All this anxiety, despair and mental trauma continue to this day. I feel very lucky that my treatment worked, I try to live a close to normal life style. I try, but I am haunted by what has happened to me and everyone else who suffered with the contamination. I feel guilty for being treated successfully, all those poor people who haven't made it through weighs very heavy on my mind constantly and each year that goes by it seems to get a bit harder and more difficult to bear.

32. I remember the day that I realised that I was one of the lucky ones; it was around 1995 when I had been going to the hospital for several years and knew the staff nurse (Mandy Holliday) quite well. However, something was weighing heavy on my mind at the time and I asked Mandy a question; " I have been coming here on the same day for years now and every time I am here I never see any familiar faces, why?", her reply was " you don't know do you? Everyone is dying apart from you".

33. That statement still haunts me to this day, all those people who have attended the clinic for all those years whilst I was there are no longer with us and everyone who has died since. You cannot imagine how that hurts and how hard it is to live with such pain and torture. Yes there has been a lot of physical pain over the years but the mental torture has been the more difficult to contend with and continues to be. I am a member of the CBC chat on Facebook and I want to be involved with IBI but the stress that this causes is huge, but I want to be part of this IBI.

34. As a result of the change in my personality and my character my marriage broke down and I was divorced. This was a direct effect of my receiving contaminated blood. I lost everything I owned. My wife was awarded the equity in the house, my endowments; I had to pay a large proportion of my salary to ex-wife until my 2 children were 16 years old. As a salesman, the opportunities to win orders and gain commission were restricted due to my performance during the years that I was sick and being treated; this would have run into tens of thousands of pounds loss over those years.

35. I didn't really talk about my condition much. I don't know whether I suffered stigmatization because I kept my condition hidden. I was embarrassed by the fact that I had contaminated blood and how people might react. I kept my infection under wraps. Also, I didn't want special treatment –I didn't want to highlight I was ill. If I did my employer might allow me to take sick time and seem to be reasonable, but then then manage me out of business because of the infection. I wanted to get on with my life.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

36. I am always made to feel very awkward when I go to the dentist. I am always asked *do you still have HCV?* When I answer yes the staff will double mask and double glove. It is embarrassing; I can tell they are nervous about working on teeth. My dentist made me feel like a leper every time I went to an appointment.

37. The first liver biopsy surgeon treated me like a piece of meat; he really caused me pain so much so that I insisted he didn't carry out any further biopsies. I was then left on a trolley for over 2 hours in a corridor without any nursing assistance or attention, just told not to move otherwise I will bleed to death.

38. Taking interferon abroad is very difficult and can lead to very embarrassing situations. It has to be accrued in a chilled container. There are then lots of embarrassing and probing questions about what it is and what it is for – why do I need syringes. I found it all very difficult, traumatic and embarrassing.

39. I have never been offered counselling or support.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

40. I received £23,000.00 from the Skipton fund about 10 years ago. I did not receive any further financial assistance until about 2 years ago at which time Skipton paid me £1000/quarter and £515 for energy costs/year; so about £4500 each year

Section 8. Other Issues

41. This inquiry is essential to everyone who has been contaminated and those who have been affected. It should be conducted with a clear understanding about the pain that has been endured for decades. It should be conducted with sensitivity and dignity and a clear purpose of why this was allowed to happen in the UK.

42. It should address who initiated this appalling instruction which has got to be the biggest disaster since the NHS started. Who is to blame for this, what is the government going to do with the survivors and how government intend to look after them for the rest of their lives?

43. I hope that the inquiry will answer all of those questions. I hope that the inquiry identifies what those infected and affected can now do to get compensation for the lost time, the pain and all the suffering that this failure to humanity has created.

44. In the 1990's I requested all my medical records in order that I could start a law suit. Strangely some of the records were either missing or not available to me. The details are sketchy but I was not given enough information to get started and therefore had to abandon my attempt. This was from Nottingham City Hospital.

45. No one advised me about the risks involved before I was given a transfusion. In the early part of my treatment, I wasn't given clear information regarding the seriousness of being contaminated. I wasn't told about the pain I would endure

with having the first liver biopsy. When first diagnosed with HEP C the doctors asked very searching questions about my sexual experiences, body art and piercings, everything was discussed to try and deflect the true reason why I was contaminated.

46. I was told that I was contaminated with blood from America which the American government encouraged donors to give their blood for $1, this was told to me by a doctor, I don't remember which one and I don't know if this was true or not. I want the Inquiry to find out the truth about how this blood got into the NHS blood banks and to get those involved to explain why the NHS ignored all of the risks about using blood and blood products. I want the Inquiry to ask those involved why they decided that saving money was worth more than human life.

47. I want to know what has happened to my medical records as the records that I have are not complete.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 8th february 2019