

Witness Name: Sandra Elizabeth King

Statement No:WITN1678001

Exhibits:WITN1678002-3

Dated: January 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SANDRA ELIZABETH KING

I, Sandra Elizabeth King, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Sandra Elizabeth King, DOB [GRO-C] 1964, and I live at [GRO-C]
[GRO-C]
2. My ex-husband, Jonathan Evans, DOB [GRO-C] 1962, died on 08.10.1993 at the age of 31 after being infected with HIV, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C through contaminated Factor VIII Concentrate.
3. This statement should be read in conjunction with my that of my son, Jason Jonathan Evans (WITN1210001).
4. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Jonathan'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

5. Jon had Haemophilia A and received treatment from Coventry and Warwickshire Hospital (CWH), The Walsgrave Hospital, Oxford Haemophilia Centre and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH), Birmingham. According to his medical records he started home treatment in 1976 and it appears that he was first given Factor VIII concentrate in 1977.
6. His medical records state that he had Hepatitis in 1976 and was jaundiced. He tested positive for the Hepatitis B antibody in November 1977. Later in his notes his previous medical history refers to Hepatitis in 1983. This was when he was treated in the Walsgrave Hospital for a right knee problem.
7. When we first got together, Jon and I continued living with my parents so we could save money for a mortgage, before he moved in to our family home. Jon and I were married in June 1984.
8. Before we married, I was at home when my Father saw something on the news about a Scottish man dying as a result of receiving bad blood products. My Father told me and I immediately called Jon who was in the hospital and told him. He demanded to be put on cryoprecipitate but they reassured him there was nothing to worry about and it was just a one off case.
9. Jon was under Dr Shinton at CWH and had received treatment from him for a long time. Jon even invited Dr Shinton to our wedding.
10. In March 1985 Jon was referred to Oxford to see whether the Haemophilia Unit there would treat him because he was having so many problems with bleeds in his knees. They had an orthopaedic specialism there.
11. In the Spring of 1985, Dr Shinton invited us into his office for a chat. He shuffled through Jon's medical notes when he casually said 'your test results are positive'. We were extremely confused and asked "what test results?". He

then said Jon had been diagnosed with HIV. He also told us that there was no cure. We asked when Jon would die but Dr Shinton said he didn't know.

12. He told us that we were not to have sex or kiss, and we shouldn't share toothbrushes. He said that as we were married, I would also have to be tested.

13. We asked when Jon had been tested and he said it was some time ago. Jon's notes show that he first tested positive in November 1984. This means that Dr Shinton likely knew about Jon's test results for months but he still neglected to tell Jon the results of the test. I cannot believe how dangerous this was, and I am very fortunate to have tested negative.

14. We were absolutely gobsmacked. We walked in to that office a happy, having only married a year previously, and came out with the knowledge that our lives had changed forever.

15. They said I would have to be tested every 3 months. It wasn't Jon's fault but this put a lot of stress on our relationship and Jon struggled with the thought that he may have infected me.

16. When we told his mum she didn't even believe us, she thought we were joking.

17. I was never told anything about Hepatitis C; Jon never knew he had also been infected with this.

Section 3. Other Infections

18. I am not aware of any other infections Jon may have been infected with.

Section 4. Consent

19. Jon had no knowledge that he had been tested for HIV or Hepatitis, and therefore could not have consented to these tests.

20. If he had been made aware that there was a possibility of him being infected, we could have taken precautions to protect him from infecting me also.

21. His medical records show that he was first tested for HIV in November 1984. It is disgraceful that Dr Shinton kept this result from him particularly when he knew we were newly married.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

22. After Jon had been informed of his diagnosis, we had some neighbours round who we were good friends with; [GRO-D] and [GRO-D]. [GRO-D] spotted the sharps box that was on top of the fridge freezer, so Jon explained everything to him. [GRO-D] was absolutely fine with it, but his wife clearly wasn't. She went around the entire cul-de-sac and told everyone about Jon's infection, as she claimed it was her 'neighbourly duty'.

23. Jon had been working on a customer helpdesk at Selco when he told a colleague about his infection. Jon's colleagues stopped going for drinks with him when they found out, and shortly after he was dismissed, I am not clear as to why this is but we suspected it was due to him having HIV.

24. At the time of Jon's diagnosis I was working full time at a dog's home. I eventually gave this up and took a part time job in a [GRO-D] so I had more time to be with Jon.

25. After my first day at the [GRO-D] Jon came to pick me up from work and got out of the car with his walking stick. One of the girls at work asked what was wrong with him, so I simply said that he had Haemophilia.

26. The next day I got a call from the owner of the [GRO-D] who asked if Jon had Haemophilia. When I said "yes", he said "does he have the other thing?". I asked what thing and he said "AIDS". I said "no, he has HIV but I haven't got it". He told me that the girls in the [GRO-D] weren't comfortable working with me and not to bother going in.

27. We went to the press as we were so outraged that I had lost my job as a result of this, but I regret doing that now. We were completely hounded by the community who threw eggs and flour at the house. People would point at us in the street and avoid us in town; we had abusive letters put through the letterbox. I wish I still had the letters to demonstrate just how nasty they were, but Jon ripped them up at the time. Eventually we pulled the phone socket out of the wall because of the abusive phone calls we were getting.
28. There is now shown to me marked "**WITN1678002**" a copy of the local press article referred to above. After this was published we were approached by the local news and were interviewed by them.
29. At one point Jon had gone into the Queen Elizabeth Hospital for a bleed. It was a terrible stay for him. He was in a side room and the medical staff wore masks all the time, even to bring his food and drinks. I remember asking them if they would remove the piled up plates and cups on his locker. There was food and stuff around the floor where the bed was and it was clear they were keeping away from Jon for fear of getting infected. This upset him very much, I remember there was a plastic sheet up in the room, I think near the door to keep the germs in, it was like they had quarantined him.
30. Jon also went on a TV show with his mum where he had people call in and tell him that we should be put on a desert island.
31. The stigma was also felt from my own family. One day when I was at my brother's house with Jon, I accidentally dropped a mug. When I picked it up, I saw that it had my initials on the bottom of it. After checking Jon's, his too had his initials on it, and it was clear my sister in law had marked out mugs for us as she didn't want to drink from the same cup. I was absolutely distraught and made an excuse to leave, and after this we never really went back there.
32. I saw a lot less of my brother and I only told him about this five years ago. He had no idea his wife had done this, but looking back it was clear that she took the kids to play upstairs and pretend to be busy anytime we were round.

33. Jon felt very bitter about the victimisation that I suffered because I was suffering for something that was wrong with him; I was HIV negative.
34. We were unable to get a mortgage or life insurance as a result of Jon's infection.
35. Jon and I had a sexless relationship. He wouldn't even sit next to me just in case one thing led to another. He felt like he was a ticking time bomb. I felt completely unwanted and unloved, which was especially difficult as I was so desperate to have a baby.
36. We spoke to the hospital regarding the possibility of having a baby but were told it was likely both the baby and I could become infected.
37. At the end of 1988 we had sex one time. I was so worried that I had been infected. I started to feel very sick a few weeks later and my sister suggested that I do a pregnancy test. I was even more worried when I found out that I was pregnant.
38. I went to QEH where I refused the spina bifida tests as I didn't want to risk losing Jason. Fortunately, all of my HIV tests were negative.
39. When I went into labour (on GRO-C 1989) the nurses were dressed in goggles, wellington boots, long coats etc. I was then put into a room on my own at the side of the hospital instead of the normal maternity ward. There was a photographer who was taking photos of all of the new mums and she refused to take a photo of us. I was told I wasn't allowed to breast feed which I didn't understand as I didn't have HIV.
40. I had biohazard stickers all over my bed, the walls of my room and on Jason's cot, and it made me feel like a complete outcast. They eventually took them down as it was making Jon and I so upset. I couldn't wait to get home, the whole thing was vile. The only saving grace was a midwife named Millie who was absolutely lovely, and was the only one who was willing to come near me without gloves on.

41. I also found out later that they had tested the umbilical cord for HIV without telling me, although once we had left the hospital there was no interest in monitoring me or Jason to my knowledge.
42. We had a bad snow in 1991 and the power went out in the neighbourhood. One of our neighbours had a big open fire in his house and invited all of the neighbours round to keep warm; everyone was invited except us, despite the fact we had a 2 year old son. We had to drive in the dangerous snow to get to my parents house and keep warm.
43. When Jason was born it was a nice distraction for Jon as he was able to take his mind off his infection. This didn't last too long though. He was so down and depressed and he pushed me and Jason away to a point. He used to say 'you'll see him grow up and I won't.' He was jealous of the fact he wasn't going to be there for Jason's life and he wanted to detach himself from the situation.
44. Jon was trying to make himself busy by working on the house but he was just so depressed.
45. One day in the house I had a cut on my hand. Jon was working in the loft moving a box and suddenly had a nosebleed, which somehow bled onto my cut. I panicked ended up rubbing it with bleach and all sorts. It was like I was one of the people who had treated him horribly; it felt like I was becoming like them. I was also always worried about Jason and the risk of him becoming infected.
46. When Jon was treated in Oxford he became good friends with a Scottish Haemophiliac who had also been infected with HIV. He passed away in or around 1991 and the funeral was a very big deal for Jon. He went to see him in hospital and he had no teeth. He died when he was around 21 years old. Jon was never the same after that. He said at the funeral that he thought he was next.

47. When you live with someone you don't realise the deterioration in their health. He had rashes and would always be itching and scratching. It reached the point where he suggested we have separate beds because he was always moving around and itching, and he suffered from night sweats. It was like we were now strangers who had gradually just been ripped apart.
48. Before the infection we were out all of the time and always active and busy.
49. It reached the stage where we couldn't even go for a meal with Jason because Jon thought people would stare at him. He had lost a lot of weight and wasn't looking well.
50. His health started to decline. He started to get a cough but the doctors said he was just paranoid. The cough developed to pneumonia less than a year later.
51. Our relationship really suffered as result of his infection, and when Jon became ill he would go and stay at his mum's which was about 5 minutes down the road. In the end, Jon and I began divorce proceedings in 1992 as it had all just become too much for us.
52. Jon didn't want to die in hospital and he made that very clear. As his mum had been a Sister at a hospital he was allowed to die at her house. I don't think he wanted Jason to see him going through all of it as it wasn't a good thing for a child to be seeing.
53. My cousin, Paul, died of Leukemia when he was 24. When we went to visit him at the hospital Paul told Jon that he didn't want me to see him because he wanted me to remember the healthy Paul. I think maybe Jon had this in his head towards the end of his life.
54. When he died his mum took care of the funeral arrangements. Jon had told us before he passed about what he wanted to do. They said they had to be careful about what was put on the death certificate as it would affect how they

handled the body. When we went to the funeral parlour to see him he had been placed in a closed casket so I didn't get to say goodbye.

55. We still loved each other and I have no doubt that if he had never been infected we would still be together now. It is still so difficult to talk about.

56. I feel guilty about not having HIV myself. There is an element of survivor's guilt as some wives became infected but I never did.

57. For some reason the Churchill Hospital in Oxford always wanted to test me, despite the fact we were not intimate. I don't know if the other women had this happen to them also. I used to have it in my head that they were hiding things from us. You lose trust and don't believe a word they are saying to you. I have a deep distrust of medical professionals now.

58. Last year on my birthday I fell over and had to go to hospital. I had cut my head open. At about 2am I was told I might have to have a blood transfusion as I had lost so much blood. I was going ballistic and my friend called Jason to get him to come to the hospital. I was in such a state and was telling them they had given my husband HIV, so I refused to have a blood transfusion. My blood pressure dropped so low that I collapsed as the doctor was stitching my head. I stopped breathing and the doctor couldn't find a pulse. He pressed the emergency button and Jason was ushered out of the room.

59. I was also given 8 pints of blood after a lengthy operation when I smashed my hip and shattered my pelvis. I was so worried afterwards. I ended up going to the GUM clinic to be tested for everything for my own peace of mind.

60. I don't trust dentists either and I refuse to go to them.

61. I find that I can get annoyed when people are moaning about trivial things, and I know that I shouldn't be like that but I can't help it.

62. I've tried to have boyfriends but I'm no longer an emotional or loving person. I tend to push people away. I don't even know why I married my second husband, my second marriage ended in divorce.

63. I haven't bothered looking for anyone since my last husband. If I was to meet someone it invariably ends in me asking how many partners they have had and if they have been tested for HIV because I am so worried. Then the conversation ends in me telling them about my past which in turn makes them worried that I may have HIV, so I no longer see the point. Everyone says that I'm still obsessed with Jon.

64. Jason suffered at school. He had bottles thrown at him on the school bus. They would call him "AIDS boy" and people would make comments if he used the water fountain. At one stage he was out of school for 3 months. We had to move him to a catholic school in Leamington where no one knew a thing, and he could finally be happy at school.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

65. Jon was given AZT but it made him very ill.

66. Jon and I were never offered counselling whilst he was alive.

67. After he passed away I received a bit of counselling from someone who would come to my house. They came just before Jason got home from school and he would get home to me crying in the corner.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

68. Jon used to receive a monthly payment, but this was a long way off what he deserved.

69. When he passed away I had control of Jon's bank accounts. They said they would continue to pay into them but this eventually stopped.

70. Jon and I were involved in the 1991 litigation, for which we had to produce witness statements. It was so positive in the beginning but it all just fizzled out. We were left with a 'take it or leave it' offer and there was nothing else we could do. No one had any say in it. We felt totally betrayed, lied to and let down, we were powerless. We didn't have the internet or the support of the press so it was very difficult for us to fight for anything.

71. A copy of Jon's witness statement is exhibited at "WITN1678003." This tells his story in his own words.

72. I received the Stage one payment from the Skipton Fund after Jason fought for me to get it.

Section 8. Other Issues

73. The people that are responsible for this and still alive should pay for this. It is unfair that they get to live a normal life after the hurt they have caused and continued to cause.

Anonymity

74. NOT RELEVANT

75. I do not want to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

Dated

Signed

GRO-C

Dated

3/10/2019