

Witness Name: L Gregory
Statement No: WITN4139001
Exhibits: 0
Dated: March 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF LEIGH GREGORY

I, Leigh Gregory will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Leigh Gregory and I was born on **GRO-C** 1960. I live at **GRO-C** I am married and I have 3 daughters, 1 son and 1 step-daughter. I am mostly retired, but work 15 hours a week as a Cognitive Behaviour Therapist for the NHS.
2. I make this statement in relation to my brother, Matthew Gregory, who has provided a statement under **WITN1250001**. I am aware that his wife, Rebecca Osborn, has also provided a statement under **WITN4017001**.
3. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to Matthew's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

4. Matthew has severe Haemophilia A and was treated with contaminated Factor VIII concentrates and as a result was infected with **GRO-C** HCV and HIV.

5. I believe that my brother was treated for bleeds with Factor VIII concentrates from childhood and, like many others, came to be infected in this way.
6. I believe he was treated at the Children's Hospital in Derby. The details of such treatment are not known to me as my parents were managing and dealing with Matthew's hospital visits.
7. The only information I was given about Matthew's infections was from my parents.
8. Having worked for the NHS for over forty years, I believe that the information regarding the risk of infection from Factor VIII concentrates provided to my brother and parents was negligible. I also believe that information was deliberately withheld by the clinicians (possibly under instruction) after his infection took place.
9. I am of the view that the clinicians were also aware of Matthew's infections prior to them disclosing the existence of the same to my family; information was not conveyed in a timely manner. Furthermore, I do not believe that any of my family were given adequate information about the risks of transmission. I, personally, was not given any information by any health professionals regarding this.

Section 3. Other Infections

10. I am unaware as to whether my brother was infected with, or exposed to, anything other than GRO-C, HCV and HIV.

Section 4. Consent

11. I believe that important information about the infections was withheld from my brother and parents. I find this shameful which is only accentuated by the fact that I have worked in the NHS for over 40 years as a health professional.

12. I believe that my brother was tested for various viruses without his or my parent's knowledge and therefore without consent.

Section 5. Impact

13. Matthew's life has been affected in many ways. Having been infected at a young age, it impacted on a number of aspects of his life. His work, educational opportunities, relationships and family life. His family life was particularly affected in that he was unable to risk having children and his ability to purchase a house was compromised.

14. My brother's life has been fundamentally affected by the infection in relation to both his social and work life. There is no area of life and lifestyle that is unaffected by his infections.

15. The psychological difficulties of having to carry a secret for many years in order to protect himself and his family from the prevalent ignorance of society at the time, has also greatly affected him.

16. Matthew has suffered from numerous medical issues over the years related to the infections, drug therapy and the associated interactions of these with his Haemophilia.

17. Matthew has had numerous difficulties receiving treatments over the years and often due to the additional measures for managing the infections in a hospital setting.

18. I have witnessed the enormous strain that Matthew's infections took on him, both as a child and in adulthood. Despite this, he has always dealt with his difficulties with courage and has never complained. However, this doesn't mask the fact that the infections have had a clear and fundamental impact on his life and normal functioning.

19. The main impact on me has been an emotional one. The sense of helplessness in the situation; not being able to help my younger brother in any practical way with the vast array of difficulties he has experienced over the years, has been hard.
20. Then there is the distress of watching my parents mentally struggling with the situation and it was particularly hard to see the long term impact upon my father's mental health before he died last year. It has left me feeling angry toward the organisation for whom I have worked for over forty years. I also feel guilty that despite having the same chance of suffering with Haemophilia as Matthew, I escaped. I was therefore not going to be put at risk of being infected via contaminated blood products. I carry the guilt of therefore experiencing a relatively normal life.
21. My parents and brother have had to live with this secret for many years due to our society and the associated media attitudes in relation to HIV. This has only improved in relatively recent times. Having your youngest son diagnosed, with what was believed to be a death sentence at the time, and not being able to talk about it was a huge strain on my parents.
22. It is a great credit to both Matthew and my parents that they have behaved as normally as is possible around other family members. The main effect for me and my other brother's family has been watching the effect on people you love and not being able to make anything better.
23. My brother's schooling was very badly affected by the infections which only added to and dramatically exacerbated the pre-existing difficulties already in existence as a result of his severe Haemophilia.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

24. The attitudes and fear in relation to HIV caused Matthew to experience significant difficulties in relation to his specialist medical and dental needs.

25. I believe that one of the damaging impacts of being infected by these life changing illnesses by the NHS, which is supposed to do no harm, is that it creates a lack of trust in the care system and in those who govern and manage it.

26. There has been no offer of counselling or psychological support for any of our family in consequence of Matthew's infections.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

27. I have received no financial assistance.

Section 8. Other Issues

28. I believe that Matthew and my mother should receive justice in terms of compensation for their enormous physical, mental and emotional suffering.

Anonymity

29. I do not wish to apply for anonymity.

30. 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..... **GRO-C**

Dated..... 22/3/2020