

Witness Name: Mari Barnes
Statement No: WITN4168001
Exhibits: WITN4168002
Dated: 19 December 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF MARI BARNES

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry rules 2006 dated 16th April 2020. I adopt the paragraph numbering in the Rule 9 request for ease of reference.

I, Mari Barnes, will say as follows:-

1. **Introduction**

1. My name is Mari Barnes. My date of birth is GRO-C 1946 and my address is known to the Inquiry.

2. **How Affected**

1. I make this statement on behalf of my late father-in-law, William Charles Barnes, who passed away in 2000. I am the wife of John Barnes (WITN4166). My husband is the representative of his deceased father, and has already provided a statement to the Inquiry.

2. My father-in-law William suffered with haemophilia. However, he was a very private man, so you rarely heard him say anything about this. I do not have any stories of my father in law's haemophilia as I met my husband when we were both 15 years old.
3. From what my husband John has told me, William suffered from haemophilia A. He received most of his treatment at the Haemophilia Centre at the University Hospital Wales in Cardiff (UHW). He mainly received treatment from Professor Bloom and in his later life, Dr Dasani treated him.
4. My husband's family has a long history of haemophilia, he is quite lucky not to have it himself. He had two uncles that suffered with haemophilia and both passed away as a result of bleeding to death. GRO-C
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5. From what my husband has told me, my father-in-law received cryoprecipitate treatment for his haemophilia and then later went onto use Factor VIII treatment.
6. I recall that in the early 1990s my father-in-law was told he had tested positive for hepatitis C. My husband told me that my father-in-law was told this news by Dr Dasani at UHW.
7. My husband received a letter dated 1st September 2017 from the Consultant Haematologist at UHW, Professor Collins. In the letter Professor Collins confirmed that my father-in-law contracted hepatitis C from contaminated blood. I refer you to a copy of the letter at **Exhibit WITN4168002**.

3. **Other infections**

1. I do not know of any other infections my father-in-law suffered as a result of his hepatitis C. Since my husband requested his late father's medical records, we have been able to see a number of conditions that William had that we weren't aware of. We have learned that not only did William contract hepatitis

C but he also developed, chronic haemophilic arthropathy of both ankles, angina, hypertension, heartburn, bilateral lower limb pain and an aortic aneurysm.

4. Consent

1. My husband says he does not believe his father was tested/treated without his knowledge or consent and I believe this. As my husband says in his statement, my father-in-law believed the treatment he was being given was going to help him, not hurt him.
2. After my husband viewed his father's records, we learned that his blood samples had undergone a vCJD test in 2005. This was not something my husband was made aware of, nor did he provide consent to the hospital to perform such a test.

5. Impact

1. As I state at the beginning of my statement, my father-in-law was a very private man. He kept a lot to himself, therefore I don't believe I can give you a full answer in terms of what the impact was on him. He didn't talk about his hepatitis C diagnosis if our children were in his company.
2. Looking back, myself and my husband were a bit reluctant to visit and take the children to his house when we found out about the hepatitis C. However, this was out of not being educated on what it meant to have the infection. We were nervous initially, but the grandchildren needed to see their grandad and things needed to remain as normal as possible. Therefore, the grandchildren did visit him.
3. My father-in-law was always confident enough to go straight to the hospital if there was ever anything wrong with him. You wouldn't know if he was having a bleed as he would simply go down to the hospital and get on with things.

4. Our children didn't learn of the hepatitis C until they were older, but they have always been very understanding. I don't remember when we told the children or how this occurred.
5. My father-in-law did eventually receive treatment for his hepatitis C. This consisted of Interferon treatment. However, I am not aware of any of the side effects he experienced as a result of this.
6. When my father-in-law passed away in 2000, I believe myself and my husband coped well when he passed away. We were quite naïve and thought the hepatitis C would go away when he had it. I don't believe we ever knew the full effects of the condition and what it can do to the human body.
7. I have lovely memories of our children watching my father-in-law gardening. He loved gardening and had a lovely garden. That was his pride and joy. He also used to enjoy a kick about with our son.
8. I am aware that my father-in-law had work troubles at the colliery because of his haemophilia. However, I had not met my husband John at that time.
9. I can confirm we have never been offered any counselling or psychological support and neither was my father-in-law.

6. **Treatment/Care Support**

1. As I have stated earlier in my statement, my father-in-law received most of his treatment at the UHW. He was also under the hepatology department there when he had treatment for his hepatitis C.
2. The treatment for the hepatitis C consisted of Interferon. As far as I am aware, I do not believe he had any problems accessing this treatment. I do not know what the side effects of the treatment were on my father-in-law, as I have said earlier in my statement, he was a very private man.

7. **Financial Assistance**

1. My husband received a lump sum one off payment from the Skipton Fund in the region of £20,000 in 2017. I can confirm he has not received anything from the Wales Infected Blood Support Scheme.

8. **Other Issues**

1. We have been blessed with a lot of information from the Skipton Fund, but overall, I would like for the truth to come out and find out why individuals were given contaminated blood.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-C

Dated.....

19:12:2020

