

Witness Name: Nicholas Gregory

Statement No: WITN4180001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: April 2020

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF NICHOLAS GREGORY

I, Nicholas Gregory, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Nicholas Gregory. I was born on [GRO-C] 1961 and I live at [GRO-C] Derbyshire [GRO-C].
2. My brother, Matthew Gregory (born on [GRO-C] 1969), was co-infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) [GRO-C] [GRO-C] through contaminated blood products. He has provided a witness statement to the Inquiry under witness number **WITN1253001**.
3. My other brother, Leigh Gregory, and Matthew's wife, Rebecca Osborn, have also provided witness statements to the Inquiry under **WITN4139001** and **WITN4017001** respectively.
4. **This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my brother's full medical records.**

Section 2. How Affected

5. I have two brothers. Matthew has severe Haemophilia A, diagnosed at around the age of 2. Leigh and I are several years older than Matthew. Matthew is the only one of us to have haemophilia.
6. Matthew was treated at Sheffield Children's Hospital initially. His treatment was then transferred to the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary (DRI) Hospital from when he was 6 or 7 years old. I refer to Matthew's Statement in relation to the Factor VIII (FVIII) concentrate brands he was treated with from around that age.
7. Matthew spent a lot of his infancy at the Children's Hospital having treatment. Leigh and I whiled away many, many hours at the hospital with Matthew and our parents at that time. When Matthew started treatment with FVIII concentrate, we all thought it was a great thing. It was kept in our freezer and our mother administered it to Matthew at home. There was no warning of any risk of infection.
8. I am 8 years older than Matthew and I was living and working in London when Matthew was informed that he was HIV positive. He was just 16 years old. HIV/AIDS had hit the news and I believe the FVIII concentrate he was treated with had come from paid donors in the USA to include homeless people and drug addicts.
9. Matthew was then told that he had HCV in 1991. It was another burden for Matthew to bear. I do not think that Matthew was given much information about it. I was not aware at the time how dangerous it was but I now know that it is pretty nasty.

Section 3. Other Infections

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

Section 4. Consent

11. I refer to Matthew's witness statement.

Section 5. Impact

12. To learn that Matthew was HIV positive was traumatic for our whole family. It was a bombshell. It was tantamount to a death sentence for Matthew. What is happening now with Covid-19 reminds me of the situation. We were a family of fixers but Matthew having HIV was beyond our control and there was so much ignorance and misinformation surrounding it. Moreover it was a shameful thing in 1985, detrimentally referred to as 'the gay plague' and passed around amongst the promiscuous. There was no cure.

13. I was living in London and phoned home twice weekly. My parents were very protective. They didn't tell me that Matthew had HIV for a couple of weeks. They struggled emotionally and they tried to shield me from what was going on. They did not want me to worry but then they decided I needed to know. When my mother told me over the phone, she thought I was going to be angry with her for not telling me straight away. We were a very close family. My father was bipolar. He did not cope well with the news that Matthew had HIV and that made things even harder for my mother. We all had to keep a lid on it because my father was so emotional.

14. I didn't really talk to Matthew about it. He didn't bring it up and so I didn't either. He was still young at the time he was diagnosed and I think he coped with it better than all of us, outwardly at least. He had been through so much already with haemophilia that he had developed coping mechanisms. He has done amazingly well to still be here. I find it very difficult to talk about to this day.

15. Because of the stigma and backlash, we didn't tell people outside the family about Matthew's infections for a long time. Matthew only told one or two very close friends. When we did start telling people we ensured they understood that Matthew had not brought this on himself. People with HIV were pigeon holed back then as being gay, promiscuous and/or addicted to drugs. I am now so very proud of Matthew now and I have no issue in telling anyone. Matthew had a lot to do with the Terence Higgins Trust and went on TV to talk about it.

16. In 1990 I moved to Germany and lived there for 8 years. I came home around twice a year, always for Christmas. In 1991 Matthew found out that he had HCV. I was not in everyday contact with what was going on so my parents told me what they thought I needed to know. I don't think they were given much information about it themselves. HIV/AIDS was the main concern. Our parents were involved with the Haemophilia Society. A lot of the people they knew (some of whom Matthew grew up with) died. Matthew has kept himself very healthy and my parents did a lot for him.

17. Matthew lives about 15 miles away from me. My father died last year. My mother is 84 years old and is self isolating and Matthew has to stay off the grid all due to COVID 19. He is married now. Not a lot fazes him. He just gets on with things. I've never ever heard him moan about anything to include the physical impact of the infections which is a great credit to him

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

18. The treatment Matthew has had for his infections caused him problems but he doesn't go into in-depth detail because he isn't one to complain. It is now, as I understand it, pretty much under control. My father was a miner by occupation and our family have experience of neglect and mistreatment from the government. Miners developed coal lung. Governments generally just want people to go away and die rather than look out for their protection and care.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

19. I refer to Matthew's witness statement.

Section 8. Other Issues

20. It has been a long road to Matthew. It would be very nice if Matthew were to eventually get the closure he deserves. It is about accountability. It would be helpful if those responsible stood up because a lot of people infected and those affected deserve an answer.

Anonymity

21. I do not want to apply for anonymity.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed.....

GRO-C

Dated..... **10/05/2020**