

Witness Name: Adam Jewels

Statement No: WITN5242001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: January 2021

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF ADAM JEWELS

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I, Adam Jewels, will say as follows:-

#### **Section 1. Introduction**

1. My full name is Charles Adam Jewels. I was born on GRO-C 1988 and I live at GRO-C Devon GRO-C.
2. My father, Paul Anthony Jewels (born on GRO-C 1946), is infected with the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) through contaminated blood transfused to him in or around 1984. He was infected with HCV for 20 years without knowing it as he was only told that he had it in 2004.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's medical records.

## **Section 2. How Affected**

4. My father (Dad) needed a blood transfusion through having Chemotherapy treatment at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, Devon under Dr Amin in or around 1984. Dad was tested for HCV two decades later at the suggestion of an acupuncturist who thought Dad was displaying signs of liver inflammation.

## **Section 3. Other Infections**

5. I am not aware of any other infections.

## **Section 4. Consent**

6. Dad was not prewarned of any risk of infection before he was given the blood transfusion.

## **Section 5. Impact of the Infection**

### **Impact on Dad**

7. Dad felt very unwell and extremely fatigued for very many years without diagnosis and he suffered with overheating in certain parts of his body. The GPs at his surgery kept telling him that he was depressed. I believe he should have been tested for HCV much sooner. His frustration and feelings of helplessness in being so unwell for all that time, and without acceptable explanation, affected Dad's temperament. It had a negative impact on his behaviour, and he believes it led to the breakdown of his previous marriage. To ultimately find out that he had been infected with HCV through a contaminated

blood transfusion 20 years previously came as a huge shock to him. It was traumatic for him and distressing for us to watch him deal with.

8. Dad has sustained liver damage and needed the clearing treatment trialled in 2004 as soon as the HCV diagnosis was made.
9. Dad was referred to Dr Alex Moran at the North Devon District Hospital for treatment. He started a six-month course of Ribavirin tablets and weekly Interferon injections in June 2004. The treatment was successful but there were horrible side effects Dad had to endure. The treatment itself created further health issues for him.
10. Dad was bed ridden for six months with skin conditions, constant flu-like symptoms and he had no energy at all. During that time, Dad was effectively isolated from friends and, at times, from his family members. As a result, his mental health declined leaving him lonely and very depressed. He lost weight and had muscle wastage. Mum became his full-time carer. On the rare occasion he was able to leave the house, we had to wheel him about in a wheelchair. I often heard Dad saying he couldn't go on and it would be easier to die, and I was concerned over whether he would even make it through alive. The treatment has caused shrinkage of the blood vessels in Dad's ears causing permanent partial hearing loss and the need to wear hearing aids.
11. Dad has also been financially impacted. Before treatment, being infected with HCV affected his ability to work at the same level. He was a self-employed Chartered Surveyor earning well in excess of £100,000 per annum but given his health issues, that couldn't be sustained.
12. When treatment took place, my father was unable to work at all. With no household income, my parents made the difficult decision to sell their holiday flat at GRO-C in GRO-C Devon for £124,000, a price significantly

less than its current value today. They made the decision to re-mortgage their home too to raise the money we needed to live on. After six months and once he was given the all clear, Dad had to try to slowly build up his business again as his work was very much based on ongoing referrals and networking, The lasting health effects Dad now has means that he will never be able to work at the same level prior to becoming ill.

#### Impact on me

13. My sister, Sarah, and I were adopted by Mum and Dad and we started living with them when we were 6 years old, around 1994. As we were young, the signs of Dad being unwell were not made apparent to us as we were both naïve to the situation. I was aware Dad was actively going to acupuncture however I did not understand at the time the reasonings behind this. As I have aged, I now look back and recognise the signs of how Dad was showing signs of being ill and was often feeling very tired and struggled to do activities with us growing up like playing sports etc. other Dads were able to do with our school friends.

14. When Dad was tested and went through the treatment we were in our GCSE and A-level years at school and seeing Dad going through this was extremely emotional and worrying. I do feel it had an impact on my studies and my behaviour at school. I did board at school for a period of time to assist with my studies for A-levels, so I could get away from the situation. It was extremely worrying to see the state Dad was in as a result of the treatment and making comments that he did not want to carry on. GRO-C

GRO-C which, whilst I recognise was not his fault, was a far cry from the Dad I was used to, and it took some getting used to. It was like he had aged another 30 years and I was GRO-C my Grandad.

15. Having HCV has negative connotations. You hear of drug users and homosexuals being the people who are infected by HCV and It did make me

worry what people were thinking behind my Dad's back and what peers at school would be saying.

**Section 6. Treatment/care/support**

16. None of us were offered any counselling or psychological support.

**Section 7. Financial Assistance**

17. I do not think that my Dad has had any financial support from the Trusts and Funds.

**Anonymity**

18. I do not want to be anonymous and I understand that this Statement will be disclosed for publication to the Inquiry.

**Statement of Truth**

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

Signed..... 

GRO-C
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Dated.....26/01/2021.....