

Witness Name: Sarah Hulland

Statement No: WITN5243001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: January 2021

## INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

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### FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SARAH HULLAND

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I, Sarah Hulland, will say as follows:-

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

1. My full name is Sarah Rebecca Hulland. 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 at the Royal Devon and Exeter Hospital, Devon to treat GRO-C cancer 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. A nurse came to administer the injections. 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, GRO-C  
GRO-C  
GRO-C 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. He had a few strokes in the last couple of years. It is a miracle that he is still here.

### Impact on me

13. My brother, Adam, 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. He was a loving father, but he was always tired. He used to be fit and active. He used to be sporty and liked to go windsurfing. He used to enjoy a game of tennis but as time went on, he couldn't play tennis or do any other activity with us for long. Dad became increasingly angry and frustrated. He has been through a lot in terms of his health (starting with **GRO-C** cancer). He was very down, and he didn't understand why he was struggling as his doctors kept telling him it was part of being depressed. He developed a bad temper that he didn't used to have.

14. When Dad was tested and went through the clearing treatment we were in our GCSE and A-level years at school and seeing Dad going through this was extremely emotional and worrying. I was not great academically and I wanted to study sport at college and it really impacted my studies and my behaviour at school. Adam and I attended the same school. He was able to board at school for a period of time to assist with his studies for A-levels. I stayed home. Dad's weekly injections flattened him. The only way he could ever get out, and it

rarely happened [GRO-C]. He ended up confined to his bed. Seeing someone you love bedridden and unable to do anything for themselves is awful. It affected him in so many ways. It affected him mentally, changing his personality and making him angry (and he still gets angry to this day). He had next to no muscle mass and needed Mum to help him to and from the bathroom. I didn't think that Dad would pull through. [GRO-C]  
[GRO-C] Dad was very emotional, and it was hard for us all.

15. Home was not a happy place for me. Mum and I didn't get on. She was under a lot of stress and we were constantly fighting. I went off the rails and moved out for a year. It gave me the space I needed. I met my husband at college and he has been my rock. I have been depressed for many years and have blocked the detail of past experiences from my memory as a coping mechanism. My education was affected/interrupted as I didn't go to university straight away and have only relatively recently finished my nursing degree. I love nursing. I have two children and am about to become a mother to a third child.

## **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 .....

Dated.....20/01/2021.....