

Witness Name: EILEEN GOUGH

Statement No: WITN5649001

Exhibits: 0

Dated: APRIL 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF EILEEN GOUGH

I, Eileen Gough, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My full name is Eileen Joyce Gough. I was born on GRO-C 1943 and I live at an address known to the Inquiry.
2. My husband, Christopher John Gough (born on GRO-C 1942), was co-infected with the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and the Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) through contaminated blood products. He died from AIDS on 10th February 1995, aged 52.
3. This witness statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my husband's medical records. My daughters, Sarah Gough and Caroline Burrows, and my son, Nicholas Gough have provided their own Statements to the Inquiry (Witness Numbers WITN1246001, WITN4108001 and

WITN4109001 respectively). I refer to Sarah's Statement at paragraphs 5, 6 and 16 of this my Statement.

Section 2. How Affected

4. Christopher had severe Haemophilia A. He was treated at the Oxford Haemophilia Centre at the Churchill Hospital under the care of Dr Rizza.

Section 3. Other Infections

5. I refer to my daughter's Statement.

Section 4. Consent

6. I refer to my daughter's Statement.

Section 5. Impact of the Infection

7. I have been asked to write a short account of the effects the AIDS diagnosis had on me and the family. I am finding this account very difficult and upsetting to write as for the last 25 years, I have tried to keep the years between 1985 and 1995 pushed to the back of my mind so that I can continue to support my children and their families as I promised Christopher I would do on the day before he died.
8. He was first told that he tested HIV+ in 1985 via a telephone call from the Oxford Haemophilia centre. He was devastated by the news but no follow up support from the hospital was given. In fact we found most of our information about the virus from the TV and newspapers.
9. As the media coverage increased, I was frequently asked by people in the town where we lived whether Christopher had AIDS as many people knew

that he had haemophilia. We had been told by the medics not to tell anyone because of the consequences that might happen. I found this a very difficult time having to constantly lie.

10. A lot of close friends would no longer come and visit us and we were given lots of excuses why we could not see them. They would not let their children come and play. It was very difficult to explain to our children why friends did not want to mix with them anymore. Friends would not even come in for a coffee. I later learnt that many thought that if Christopher had AIDS they might catch the virus from a coffee cup.

11. I consider myself very lucky that despite those very difficult years of lying and pretending, Christopher lived for another 10 years, enough time for the children to get older. He was very brave and continued to try to live as normal a life as possible for the sake of his family, despite all the mental strain. He even decided one day to tell the headmaster of our son's school about his HIV status because he knew that was the right thing to do. The school were excellent, they respected his confidentiality and after his death they supported my son through some very difficult times, even arranging counselling, something the hospital/NHS did not do.

12. As Christopher began to physically deteriorate, the medical consultant at the hospital advised me to tell my daughter, who was by then at medical school, that her father had AIDS. She was understandably upset but was relieved that she was not being lied to anymore. She helped me to tell her sister who had just started university. I had the difficult job of telling my 15 year old son, who was very close to his father, that his Dad was dying of AIDS. I can still see the look on his face, even after all these years. He felt that he had been lied to, which was true and this is something I have had to live with. Did we do the right thing by not telling our children or family?

13. My children were marvellous at supporting me after Christopher died despite the effect that his death had on them.

14. I feel very resentful that my husband never got to meet his children's partners or his grandchildren because of this dreadful disease and the way it was handled.

Section 6. Treatment/care/support

15. No counselling or support was offered to us by the hospital/NHS.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

16. I refer to my daughter's Statement.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

17. I do not seek anonymity and understand that my Statement will be published by the Inquiry.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed... GRO-C

Dated... 28/4/2021