Witness Name: Tina Anne Hind
Statement No.: WITN5535001
Exhibits: **Nil**
Dated: 11 November 2021

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

WRITTEN STATEMENT OF TINA ANNE HIND

I provide this statement in response to a request under Rule 9 of the Inquiry Rules 2006 dated 28 August 2021.

I, Tina Anne Hind, will say as follows: -

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Tina Anne Hind. My date of birth is GRO-C 1960 and my address is GRO-C

2. I live alone with my husband of 29 years, Dave. I have two grown-up sons, Tony and Daryl. I retired in April this year.

3. I intend to speak about my infection with hepatitis C ("HCV"). In particular, the nature of my illness, how the illness affected me, the treatment received and the impact it had on me, my family and our lives together.

Section 2. How Infected

4. I married for the first time in 1977, from which I took the surname 'Kirk'. In 1979, I lost my first child, who was severely premature.

5. I had my second child Tony, in 1980. I went into Kingsmill Hospital in Mansfield on my twentieth birthday, GRO-C 1980, as I was undergoing contractions 10 weeks early. The nurses attempted to stop the contractions but were unable to do so. By tea time on the GRO-C, around 3.50pm, they decided to perform an emergency caesarean section.

6. I was put under general anaesthetic and felt groggy for a few hours after the caesarean section. When I came around I was told that I had lost a lot of blood during the operation and had received two blood transfusions, one whole blood and one plasma. My son, Tony, was born 10 weeks early and weighed just 3 pounds and 1 ounce.

7. I stayed in hospital for 2 weeks after giving birth and Tony was kept on an incubator for 7 weeks. During this time, I visited him every day at the hospital. After 7 weeks he had gained sufficient weight to allow me to bring him home.

8. After Tony's birth I felt fit and healthy. I had my third child, Daryl, in 1985. This pregnancy went smoothly and again my baby and I were healthy afterwards.

9. Life continued normally after the births of Tony and Daryl. I separated from my husband and married my current husband, Dave, in 1992. We lived happily with Dave working as a lorry driver and I was working part-time whilst also caring for the children.

10. In 2000 I decided to donate blood. A friend of mine who I worked with at the time said she was going to donate and I said I would come along

with her. This was the first time I had given blood and I had no problems with the process. It all went well and was quick. The nurse remarked that they needed more people like me to donate.

11. Then, 2 to 3 weeks after donating blood, I received a letter in the post from the Blood Transfusion Service, that said there was a problem with my blood. They asked that I book an appointment at Sheffield Hospital, which had the closest relevant department with the quickest appointment.

12. I managed to book an appointment for 2 weeks' time. During this fortnight, I was panicking and worried about what was wrong with me. Dave was concerned that it could be HIV. We had no idea what was wrong with my blood until we attended the hospital appointment 2 weeks later. It felt like a lifetime. It caused some friction, with me thinking that Dave may think that I had been unfaithful and me wondering the same about him.

13. The hospital appointment was with a female doctor, whose name I cannot recall, at the haematology department at Sheffield Hospital. The doctor said that I had tested positive for hepatitis C. She asked me if I knew what hepatitis C was. I had absolutely no idea at the time and believed that it was linked to AIDS.

14. The doctor explained that it was a blood infection that would damage my liver. I asked how I could have possibly got this blood infection. We spoke for a few minutes during which the doctor asked me about my sexual activity, previous relationships, any previous drug use and my alcohol intake. I responded that I had never been sexually promiscuous, I had never taken drugs and I had barely touched alcohol since my teenage years. My father was an alcoholic and consequently I had witnessed the horrors and damage that alcohol can cause.

15. After all these options had been exhausted, the doctor asked if I had ever received a blood transfusion. I explained that I had received blood

during a caesarean section when giving birth to my eldest boy in 1980. The doctor then simply concluded that this was how I had contracted HCV. I do wonder why I was asked all of the risky lifestyle questions before whether I had had a blood transfusion.

16. The doctor gave me some general infection management advice such as being cautious when I had a bleed. I was advised to disinfect the area and not let anyone else touch my blood. I also recall being warned that HCV would damage my liver. I was in a state of shock and cannot remember much else about the appointment.

17. The doctor at Sheffield Hospital referred me to Dr Scott at Lincoln County Hospital, who I believe was the consultant in the haematology department. I had an appointment with Dr Scott every 6 months for blood tests and monitoring.

18. Around a year after my diagnosis I had a liver biopsy. I had to go on my own as Dave was working away in Spain at the time. It was very nerve-wracking.

19. The biopsy was performed with a large needle that was inserted into my side. A scan beforehand had shown that my liver was quite far back and appeared to be misshaped. The first time the needle entered me they couldn't find my liver. They repeated this on two more occasions and, after the third attempt, gave up trying to find my liver. It was truly excruciating and something that could never go through again without better anaesthetic or sedation.

20. I was in hospital for the entire day. I couldn't breathe without experiencing a sharp pain as if I was being stabbed. They had used local anaesthetic but it still hurt awfully. I was sobbing on the phone to Dave and he was upset because he couldn't help me. I wasn't able to sit properly afterwards.

21. Around 3 months later the hospital arranged for a second attempt at a liver biopsy. Dave had arranged to be at home to support me through it.

Despite this, I was petrified at the thought of going back again. I said to the nurses that if they wanted to take a liver biopsy they would have to sedate me.

22. I was grateful that the nurses gave me a sedative that relaxed me prior to and during the biopsy. Although it still hurt, I was able to get through the pain on this occasion. This liver biopsy was successful as they had scanned me prior to the operation to determine exactly where the liver was.

23. After taking an initial piece of my liver, the doctors asked if they could take two more pieces for experimental purposes. I consented to this as the pain was manageable, and they took two more strands of my liver that looked like a thin piece of cotton.

24. After the biopsy I had to lie on my side to keep pressure on the needle entry point because of the risk of internal bleeding. I was kept in the hospital all day until they had determined that my blood pressure was stable and there was no internal bleeding.

25. The pain worsened after the anaesthetic wore off and it took a few days to get over. After this I had to have a liver biopsy every 3 years, Dave attended each time taking time off work. These regular biopsies showed that I had 6% scarring of the liver and that it was not worsening dramatically over time.

26. One year before my treatment, in 2016, I was sent for a fibroscan at Nottingham Queen's Medical Centre (QMC). This scan felt like it was flicking my rib, which was much better than the stabbing sensation of the biopsy. The fibroscan was able to get much deeper into my liver and, as a result, confirmed that my liver scarring was actually around 4%. I believe that my liver condition was helped by my avoidance of alcohol and my generally healthy lifestyle. I realise that it could have been much worse.

27. I was initially offered treatment around a year after my diagnosis in 2000. At this time Dr Sreedharan had taken over from Dr Scott as head of the haematology department at Lincoln County Hospital. Dr Sreedharan explained that the treatment was a trial and had around a 35% chance of success. He also advised me that it would cause horrendous side-effects that would make me feel very ill.

28. I was not experiencing any obvious symptoms of HCV and my health was fine. Since I knew that my liver had only suffered slight scarring, I decided against receiving the treatment. I thought that it was not worth making myself ill if the HCV wasn't affecting me and the chance of success was so low.

29. Every 2 years or so Dr Sreedharan said that there was a new treatment available that was slightly more successful. It firstly jumped to a 50% success rate, then 70% until eventually, around 2017, Dr Sreedharan said that there was a new treatment with a 95% chance of success. By this stage I decided to accept a course of treatment. I wish to add that Dr Sreedharan was fantastic throughout and was supportive of my decision not to accept treatment. I remember Dr Sreedharan saying that I had managed to hold on for the best treatment. I believe that undergoing a biopsy every three years, allowed an informed decision to be made about whether or not to have treatment, until we got to a point where I could be confident of success.

30. I began a three month course of treatment in 2017 that consisted of two tablets taken one in the morning and one at night. I cannot remember the name of the medication. I had a check-up at the halfway stage where the hospital took 3 lots of blood samples. These tests showed that the treatment was working.

31. I did not encounter any significant side-effects with the treatment medication, although I did occasionally struggle with insomnia. I was prescribed medication for this and this helped straightaway. Besides this, I felt fine.

32. After completing the course of treatment I had a blood test that showed the HCV was undetectable. This test was repeated after one year with the same findings, and again two years after completing the course. I have been clear of HCV ever since.

Section 3. Other Infections

33. I did not receive any other infections.

Section 4. Consent

34. I believe, to the best of my knowledge, that I consented to all treatment and testing that I have received.

Section 5. Impact

35. After my diagnosis in 2000, it soon dawned on me that I was carrying HCV when I gave birth to my youngest son Daryl. **GRO-C**

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36. There were occasions after my diagnosis when I would return from work and have a nap on the sofa. I attributed this to getting older though it may have been caused by the HCV. However, I wasn't overly fatigued and I did not suffer from any noticeable symptoms in consequence of my HCV infection.

37. I was refused a number of jobs as a result of my HCV infection. One of these jobs was for a carer's role and another was working in a kitchen. The kitchen employer said that they were sorry but they could not risk infecting others if I had a cut when using the kitchen utensils.

38. I managed to get a job in a factory. My employers knew about my HCV infection and were fine with it. They had a first-aider on site at all times who knew about the risks. They were a very understanding employer. If I ever had a bleed at work I would clean it all up myself to prevent the risks to others.

39. I told my parents, my sister, my sons and my close friends about my diagnosis. They were all supportive and helped me through it. I did not experience any form of stigma or notice any change in their behaviour.

40. When I received the initial letter informing me that there was an issue with my blood, Dave and I were both very tense and cautious of one another. It affected our marriage as Dave suspected that I may have been having an affair, and conversely was concerned that he may have infected me. It put a strain on our marriage but this soon subsided after we learnt that it was caused by an infected blood transfusion.

41. We had never heard of HCV when I received my diagnosis. Dave associated hepatitis with HIV/AIDS and was worried that it could be linked to that. We gradually began to learn more about the virus and this meant our marriage was able to return to normal. We remain very happily married and are able to carry on with life together.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

42. I was open and honest about my infection with HCV with both doctors and dentists. This did not cause me to face any difficulties in obtaining treatment. I only ever noticed that doctors would wear gloves when they hadn't previously, but I understood and accepted this.

43. I cannot say for certain whether I was offered counselling or psychological support, although I would not have accepted it. I am a strong person and have always tackled things head on with the help of my family.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

44. Dr Sreedharan informed us about the Skipton Fund, a fund that was available to those infected with HCV through NHS blood. He gave me all the forms to complete and said to return them to him. He would then complete the form and send it off on my behalf.

45. Dr Sreedharan duly sent off the application to the Skipton Fund and shortly afterwards I was awarded a stage 1 payment of £20,000. I also received at that time, approximately £333 a month.

46. These monthly payments have gradually increased over the years and now amount of £1538 a month. I received a levelling-up payment of £30,000 two months ago to bring the stage 1 payments in line with those that had been received by claimants in Scotland.

47. I have received no other payments except for a winter heating allowance of about £500 every December. I sometimes receive letters regarding my dependants who may be eligible for financial assistance but this does not apply to me.

Section 8. Other Issues

48. After my diagnosis with HCV in 2000 I asked to read my GP records. I went through these in hardcopy format and discovered that there was a gap between 1979, when I had a miscarriage, and 1985 when my youngest son was born. There was no record of 1980, which was when I had a caesarean operation during childbirth and received blood transfusions. It is staggering to me that Tony's birth was not recorded in

my GP records, which leads me to believe that they may have been tampered with.

49. I have recently applied for my GP records and expect to receive these in the next few weeks. I will speak to the Inquiry investigator as soon as I receive these and will confirm whether there is a gap in the records. If necessary I am prepared to provide a supplementary statement to confirm this.

50. My husband Dave remembers reading my medical records whilst I was in a ward at Lincoln County Hospital after a sterilisation procedure around 1988. He recalls that there was a gap in the records such that the period 1980 was missing. It occurs to me that Tony's birth and my caesarean section in 1980 took place at Kingsmill Hospital in Mansfield so would not necessarily have been recorded in the Lincoln County Hospital records.

51. I believe that there was been gross negligence in the handling of this whole scandal. If my statement helps one other person who has been affected by infected blood, then it has been worthwhile.

Statement of Truth

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

Signed GRO-C

Dated 11 | 11 | 21