

Witness Name: S J Millard
Statement No: WITN1395001
Exhibits: WITN1395002-4
Dated: April 2019

INFECTED BLOOD INQUIRY

FIRST WRITTEN STATEMENT OF SAMANTHA JANE MILLARD

I, Samantha Jane Millard, will say as follows:-

Section 1. Introduction

1. My name is Samantha Jane Millard of [GRO-C] Cheshire, [GRO-C] My date of birth [GRO-C] 1987. I have one son, [GRO-C] who is [GRO-B] [GRO-C] I am a support worker for people with physical disabilities.
2. I am an affected person in relation to my late father Russell Wayne Millard, who was born on [GRO-C] 1963 and who passed away on 5th October 1990 as a result of receiving contaminated blood products.
3. My mother, Karen Millard, and brother, Daniel Millard, have also provided witness statements to the Inquiry.
4. **This statement has been prepared without the benefit of access to my father's full medical records. I confirm that there are a large proportion of medical records which have gone "*missing*".**

Section 2. How Affected

5. My late father had severe Haemophilia A and received Factor VIII from the age of approximately 18 months until his death. He received treatment at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford and his consultants were Dr Rizza and Dr Matthews.
6. He was infected with HIV and Hepatitis C as a result of receiving contaminated Factor VIII.
7. In or around the mid 1980s, I understand that my grandmother accidentally found out about my father's HIV positive status. She was standing outside his hospital room and overheard one of the consultants, who was briefing a group of trainee doctors, say "*he should be on AZT*", whilst pointing to my father's room.
8. Ironically, a short time after this, I believe that my father also found out about his HIV infection by chance. He too overheard a conversation between medical professionals. Following this, my father told his mother that he was HIV positive, not knowing that she was already aware of this.
9. I am also aware that my father and mother attended the Churchill Hospital for a routine appointment when my mother was pregnant with me, which was in 1986. My mother recalls that Mary Fletcher (who was one of the nurses), told my father that he was HIV positive. My mother and father had no idea what HIV was and they received no further information in this regard.
10. Sometime after my father found out about his HIV, he discovered that he had Hepatitis C. Dr Rizza told him that he would have to be careful with his liver but rather worryingly he was not given any further information about how to manage Hepatitis C or about the risks of transmission.

11. My father never received any information in relation to the risks of receiving Factor VIII. After he had been infected, he did not receive any adequate information in relation to how to manage his infections or regarding the risk of transmission.
12. **Exhibit WITN1395002** contains extracts from my father's medical records which clearly demonstrate that medical staff had redacted copious amounts of information.

Section 3. Other Infections

13. My father's death certificate records that he passed away due to encephalopathy and this further persuades our family that he definitely had vCJD.
14. I have been told that my father moved like a "*rag doll*" towards the end of his life. His muscles had gone totally limp and he was unable to hold himself up. He had no co-ordination and it was shocking for my family to witness this.

Section 4. Consent

15. My father was tested without his knowledge and therefore impliedly without his consent.
16. To the best of my grandmother's recollection, my father had a test conducted on his "*stored blood*" after he passed away and she strongly believes that this was a test for Hepatitis C which had clearly been undertaken without his knowledge or consent.
17. My father also Hepatitis B vaccines without his knowledge and therefore impliedly without his consent.

Section 5. Impact

18. My father was very poorly towards the latter stages of his life and passed away just before I celebrated my 4th birthday. I remember painting my father's toenails, whilst he lay in the sofa, in various different colour chalks which I kept in my Mickey Mouse pencil case. I do have distinct memories of him walking around with multi coloured toenails.
19. I loved the "*Back to the Future*" film and I remember watching this with my father multiple times during the day because he was too poorly to get off the sofa. Just before he became really poorly, I also remember my father teaching me to count the steps on the children's slide which was outside in the communal garden. He did this whilst holding my hand and he was very patient with me.
20. My father never had much energy and sometimes he used to disappear for a couple of days and I would not understand why and I did not know where he had gone. I now know that he used to be at the hospital or at my nan's house. He used to go to my nan's house when he was feeling very poorly because he did not want my brother or me to see him in that state.
21. A lot of people think that when you are very young you do not remember things vividly and that as children you bounce back quite quickly. However, for a lot of children, including myself, this was not actually the case. I remember having a very close relationship with my father. When he died, I used to wonder where he had gone and I really missed him.
22. On the day he died, my mother and my nan sat me down and told me that my father had gone to heaven and that meant that although I could not see him, he would still be able to see me. I asked them when I could go and visit heaven and also when my father would be visiting me. It had to be explained to me that once you were in heaven you could not come back to visit even if you really wanted to. I was confused and contemplated that if there was a way to get to heaven then there must also be a way to get out of heaven. I

thought to myself that once my father found a way out he would come and visit me and I would wait for him to do just that. This hope and feeling stayed with me for such a long time and affected me deeply. The love I had for my father never went away and I still feel it every day.

23. People ask how I could possibly miss someone who I never really had in my life and my response is that I remember him so well and on top of that I miss everything that we should have done together including all of those memories that we would have made and I feel completely robbed of a father.

24. When I was younger and for half of my teenage years, I believed that my father died from a bleed on the brain.

25. I discovered the truth about my father's death by accident. I remember sitting in my nan's living room watching a programme on television about Haemophiliacs and contaminated blood. The programme highlighted the fact that Haemophiliacs were dying from AIDS. My nan came into the living room and the colour completely drained from her face as she started flapping whilst urgently looked for the remote control to turn the programme off. She looked extremely uncomfortable as she turned the programme off and sat down next to me on the sofa. I said to my nan that this contaminated blood scandal happened whilst my father was still alive and I remember my nan not being able to look at me. I then said to my nan "*He did not die because of a brain haemorrhage, he died of AIDS, didn't he?*" My nan just looked at me and she did not need to say anything. I had guessed correctly and I was aged around 15. Life suddenly became far more sad and complex once I discovered the truth.

26. I was very upset and I angry although I was not angry with my family for shielding me from the truth. I understand why they did this and that they only wanted to protect me. However, I did enter a very angry phase during my late teens and when I started looking into this tragedy I was shocked at just how many people had been both infected and affected. I am still upset and angry today. I am angry that no one tried to prevent this tragedy from

happening and that no one helped my father and all the other fellow victims. I cannot understand how the Government and the NHS have got away with killing so many people.

27. Once I discovered the truth, I asked a lot of questions. I asked my mother and my nan to explain to me exactly what had happened to my father and I borrowed books from the library about Haemophilia. I also found articles online about HIV and Hepatitis C. Most of the time, my mother struggled to discuss matters with me and I totally understood that. However, despite what my nan had gone through she was able to sit down with me and talk openly about everything and I am forever grateful to her for this.

28. Due to the scale of the tragedy I have discovered that there are many other people out there who have also lost loved ones in similar circumstances to me and who actually do understand what I went through and am still going through. I have found a lot of the Facebook groups helpful because people share their stories and I have been able to do likewise. I feel that we have become part of a community in which we can talk openly about it with no one judging us. Outside of this community, people hear the words HIV and AIDS and instantly jump to conclusions, which is just not the case with the Facebook support groups. Although it is not as bad as it once was, I still believe that there is stigma surrounding both HIV and Hepatitis C.

29. When I found out the truth about how my father died, I kept very quiet about it apart from discussing it with my mother and my nan. It was a lot for me to take in and I started suffering very badly with both anxiety and depression as a result of finding out. I started missing a lot of school and I cut myself off from my friends. I would sign in at school and then go and sit at the cemetery where my father was buried. This continued for a long time and I then started drinking alcohol. Sometimes I would drink until I became unconscious. My friends would have to telephone my nan who would then have to come and rescue me. It was all too much for me and I wasn't coping.

30. My friendships were affected when I was younger. I would bite back at the friends who still had their fathers and would speak badly of them. I remember my friends would be moaning about their fathers and I would get very angry and think how awful they were being about their fathers because I would have given anything to have my father back for even two minutes. When I saw people with their fathers I felt like I became a nasty person. I did not want to have these thoughts and I did not want anyone to go through what I had had to go through. I just missed my father.
31. I was bullied as a child as I was quiet and tiny and therefore presented as an easy target. When children bullied me they used to say "*you can't tell your dad, he's dead*". They would traumatise me by telling me that my father was maggot food. I used to sit at the cemetery fearing that he would be eaten by maggots and it was my nan who again sat me down and explained that my father was protected by his coffin.
32. When I did go to school, the older children at the school were cruel to me. They told me that there was a cupboard in the doctor's office which took you up to heaven. I pretended to be poorly so that I could go to the doctor's. When I got there, I was obsessed with the cupboard and was constantly staring at it to the extent that the doctor asked me why I was looking at the cupboard. I said "*because that is the cupboard which takes you up to heaven and I want to go up to heaven and be with my dad*". The doctor had to explain that this was not the case and he was very kind to me. He said that if he had a cupboard that could do this, he would gladly show me that cupboard.
33. I failed all of my GCSE's with the exception of Mathematics. My school attendance was so poor that I had not completed a sufficient amount of coursework to pass any of the other subjects.
34. For many years, I failed to hold a job down for any length of time due to my depression and anxiety. I therefore bounced between many different jobs. I worked in a hairdresser's salon and a solicitor's firm with my auntie for a

while. When I was younger, I wanted to be a solicitor but with only 1 GCSE to my name, I fully appreciated that my chances were minute.

35. I am now enjoying my job as a support worker with adults who have physical disabilities.

36. Looking back, it upsets me that my father should have been there on my wedding day. We placed a photograph of him on a table and we lit a candle so that he was included in the ceremony. My brother walked me down the aisle.

37. I am a Haemophilia carrier which is confirmed in **Exhibit WITN1395003** which is a letter dated 11th August 2010. I have a son **GRO-C** who is **GRO-B**

GRO-B **GRO-C**

GRO-C

38. **GRO-C**

39. **GRO-C**

40. **GRO-C**

GRO-C

41. I have not been very impressed with the level of care provided by the medical staff at the Churchill Hospital. Although they reassured me, they did not give me much support. I have now moved to Widnes and the care GRO-C and I receive at the Alder Hey Children's Hospital, in Liverpool, is second to none.

Section 6. Treatment/Care/Support

42. My grandmother recollects that my father had appendicitis in or around 1989/1990 and that the doctors treated him as though he had the plague. He was admitted to Northampton General Hospital and placed on an isolation ward. The medical staff were fully gloved when dealing with my father.

43. As far as I am aware, my father was never offered any counselling or psychiatric support.

44. After my father died, I saw a counsellor for a very short time but I do not really remember much about this apart from taking long walks with her and reading a book about children coping with death which revolved around a story about a badger.

45. I think that to a degree I have dealt with a lot of my anger but I do not think it will ever go away. I do not think that any amount of counselling will take these feelings of anger away. My father should be with me today and it is hard to accept that he is absent from my life and I feel completely robbed in this respect.

46. When I was going through depression in my late teens, I started self harming at which point I was then offered counselling. I spoke about my father and the counsellor tried to assist me with coping mechanisms in an attempt to stop me from continuing to self harm. However, we did not speak about my father and why he was taken from me in great depth.

Section 7. Financial Assistance

47. My father received financial support from the Macfarlane Trust (MFT). I think that he received an initial payment of £20,000 and a further payment of £40,000.
48. Following my father's passing, my mother received a widow's allowance which was paid to her on a monthly basis. This was means tested and she had to provide detailed evidence of the state of her financial affairs. She was initially impressed with the Trust but as time went by, her initial impressions changed somewhat. She really struggled financially when my brother, Daniel, and I were young and she felt that the Trust fell short of what one would have expected in terms of providing some sort of basic care.
49. I received some assistance from the MFT. I do not recall how old I was but I may have been about aged 17. Due to the tablets which I had been taking for anxiety and depression, I had put a lot of weight on during a short period of time. My mother and my grandmother were struggling for money so my grandmother telephoned the MFT and following this, the MFT released some funds so that I could purchase new clothes.
50. I cannot comment on the application process because my grandmother dealt with the Trust.
51. My mother applied to the Skipton Fund to see whether she could obtain any grants to assist our family but her applications were turned down. Dr Giangrande advised the Skipton Fund that my father's medical records had been destroyed about 10 years ago. However, this was untrue because I had seen those medical records in Dr Giangrande's office approximately two or three years ago. I refer to **Exhibit WITN1395004** which supports my version of events that my father's medical records must have been available.
52. I had been speaking to Dr Giangrande about GRO-C
GRO-C my father's Haemophilia. I recall Dr

Giangrande holding a large file of my father's medical records and I asked him whether I could see them. He told me that I would have to apply in writing if I wanted to view my father's records. Dr Giangrande advised that following receipt of my application, he would be happy to go through my father's notes with me. He also acknowledged that it would be upsetting information for me to read. I therefore decided that perhaps it was not a good idea for me to read my father's notes. Subsequently it took my mother and me years to obtain some of my father's medical records and what we received was only a very small proportion in terms of the size of the file which I saw in Dr Giangrande's hand.

53. I never received a penny from the Skipton Fund.

Section 8. Other Issues

54. I would like to get to the bottom of what happened and specifically who made the decision to import and give bad blood to innocent people like my father. In my eyes it is murder. It is no different to filling a syringe with poison and injecting someone with it.

55. These murderous bodies and individuals need to be held accountable for what they have done. The Government and the NHS need to ensure that nothing like this ever happens again. The authorities need to provide more help to people who are still alive and struggling. I think people should be looked after, especially after everything they have gone through and how it has horrendously affected their lives. They should not have to worry about finances on top of all of their current worries.

Anonymity, disclosure and redaction

56. I wish to apply for partial anonymity by redacting details regarding my son's age.

57. I do not wish to give oral evidence to the Inquiry.

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

Signed.

GRO-C

Dated.

29/04/19